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INSTITUTES  
OF THE  
CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

VOL. I.

# THE CALVIN TRANSLATION SOCIETY,

INSTITUTED IN MAY M.DCCC.XLIII.



FOR THE PUBLICATION OF TRANSLATIONS OF THE WORKS OF  
JOHN CALVIN.







CALVIN

*From the Original Portrait in the Public Library at Geneva.*

INSTITUTES



OF

# THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

BY JOHN CALVIN.

A NEW TRANSLATION,

BY HENRY BEVERIDGE, ESQ.

VOLUME FIRST.

EDINBURGH :

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## INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

THE earliest of CALVIN'S writings—a Commentary on Seneca's Two Books, *De Clementia*—was published at Paris in 1532, before he had completed his twenty-third year. In this Commentary there is nothing to indicate that its author had begun, or was ever destined, to be a distinguished Reformer. It is dedicated to the Abbot of St Eloy of Noyon, who is addressed as a “most wise and holy Prelate,” and complimented not for the faithful discharge of his sacred functions, but for learning and taste ; the highest motive for publishing the work is plainly avowed to be the acquisition of literary fame : and throughout, though there are passages in Seneca's text which might have furnished ground for serious reflection, the subject of religion is scarcely once alluded to—certainly not alluded to in such a way as could lead any one to infer that the author had made his final choice, and was resolutely prepared to make every sacrifice for the furtherance of the Gospel.

The probability is, that at the period when Calvin wrote this Commentary, he had not embraced the Reformed Faith. Whatever his misgivings may have been, it would seem he had not altogether renounced the hope of being able to obtain, in connection with the Romish Church, that respectable *status* and literary ease which, in his Letter to Cardinal

Sadolet, he acknowledges to have been, at one time, the highest object of his ambition.

Supposing these to have been Calvin's feelings in 1532, it is certain that they soon underwent a decided change. In a letter written in 1533 to Francis Daniel, an advocate of Orleans, we find him speaking the language of a zealous Reformer; stigmatising the conduct of the Romish bigots, graphically describing and exulting in a defeat which they had recently sustained, and characterising "their so-called zeal as stolid fury—a zeal with which Elijah never burned, zealous though he was for the Lord of Hosts."

Apparently, as a counterpart to this false zeal, Calvin shortly after adopted the bold resolution of meeting bigotry on its own chosen field. Nicholas Cop being required, as rector of the University of Paris, to deliver a customary address on All Saints' Day, applied to Calvin, who, availing himself of the opportunity, furnished him with one in which religion was presented in its renovated form. The offence was one of the last which bigotry would be disposed to forgive. To avoid the combined wrath of the Sorbonne and the Parliament, Cop was obliged to save himself by flight to Basle; and Calvin, though protected for a time by the interposition of the Queen of Navarre, was ultimately unable to continue his residence at Paris, and retired into Saintonge. During his residence here he appears to have composed his second published work, entitled *Psychopannychia*, in which he refuted the erroneous idea—broached at an early period, and then revived by the Anabaptists—that in the interval between death and the final judgment, the soul exists in a state of sleep. This, however, was not his only labour. At the request of a friend, (apparently Louis du Tillet, canon of Angoulême,) he wrote what Beza calls "*Breves Admonitiones Christianas*,"—



Brief Christian Admonitions, to be read in the neighbouring congregations, with the view of gradually alluring them to the knowledge of the truth. None of these Christian Admonitions are now extant, but they are deserving of particular notice here, as having, not improbably, suggested the idea, perhaps formed the ground-work, of The Christian Institutes.

In the celebrated PREFACE to this Work, Calvin declares, that when he engaged in it, nothing was farther from his thoughts than to write what should afterwards be presented to the King; and, in confirmation of the statement that his only object was to provide a humble elementary treatise for the use of his countrymen, he appeals to the form and nature of the work itself. Looking at the work as it now exists, few would be disposed, on taking up Calvin's appeal, to give judgment in his favour: for certainly nothing can less resemble a simple elementary treatise than the Institutes as left by him at his final revisal. On the other hand, on looking at the work in its original form, and perusing the simple exposition which it gives of the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, and the Creed, the separate articles of which are often disposed of in a few sentences, one is forcibly struck with the idea, that as these might have admirably served the purpose, so they may, in fact, be identical with some of the Brief Christian Admonitions. Be this as it may, there can be little doubt, that when Calvin quitted Saintonge in 1534, he had conceived the idea, and was bent on the execution of his immortal Work.

The good offices of the Queen of Navarre in favour of the Reformers had so far succeeded, that her brother Francis I. seemed to have become favourably disposed towards them, and hopes began to be entertained that the cruel persecutions to which they had been subjected would be finally suppressed.

In these circumstances, Calvin ventured to quit his retirement; but the hopes which had been entertained were soon miserably disappointed. Bigotry and persecution regained their ascendancy; and Calvin, finding it impossible to exert himself to any useful purpose, left the country in the beginning of 1535, and took up his residence at Basle. Having remained here for some time, a retired and laborious student, he at length published *THE CHRISTIAN INSTITUTES*. The publication forms a kind of era in the history of the Theological Literature of the Reformation; and as several questions of interest have been raised with regard to it, the present seems the appropriate place for entering into the consideration of them.

One question relates to the date of the *FIRST EDITION* of the *Institutes*.

It is admitted on all hands, that the earliest edition extant is that which was printed at Basle in 1536; but it is argued that there must have been an edition of a date not later than 1535. The chief ground of this opinion is the following passage from Calvin's Preface to the Commentary on the Psalms:—

“*Ecce autem quum incognitus Basileæ laterem, quia multis piis hominibus in Gallia exustis, grave passim apud Germanos odium ignes illi excitaverant, sparsi sunt, ejus restinguendi causa, improbi ac mendaces libelli, non alios tam crudeliter tractari quam Anabaptistas ac turbulentos homines, qui perversis deliriis non Religionem modo sed totum ordinem Politicum convellerent. Ego hoc ab aulicis artificibus agi videns, non modo, ut indigna sanguinis innoxii effusio falsa sanctorum Martyrum infamia sepeliretur, sed ut posthac per cædes quaslibet absque ullius misericordia grassari liceret, silentium meum non posse a perfidia excusari censui, nisi me pro virili opponerem. Hæc mihi edendæ Institutionis causa fuit: primum ut ab injusta contumelia vindicarem*

fratres meos, quorum mors pretiosa erat in conspectu Domini; deinde, quum multis miseris eadem instarent supplicia, pro illis dolor saltem aliquis et sollicitudo exteras gentes tangeret. Neque enim densum hoc et laboriosum opus, quale nunc extat, sed breve duntaxat *Enchiridion* tunc in lucem prodiit: neque in alium finem, nisi ut testata esset eorum fides, quos videbam ab impiis et perfidis adulatoribus scelerate proscindi. Porro, an propositum esset mihi famam aucupari, patuit ex brevi discessu, præsertim quum nemo illic sciverit me authorem esse. Quod etiam alibi semper dissimulavi, et in animo erat idem institutum proseguere, donec *Genevæ*," &c. :—

“While I was living at Basle, retired and unknown, the indignation of the Germans having been deeply roused by those fires in which a great number of godly men had been burnt alive in France, it was circulated, in wicked and lying pamphlets, with the view of suppressing that indignation, that the only persons who had been thus cruelly treated were Anabaptists and turbulent men, who, by their perverse ravings, were subverting not religion only, but all civil order. Seeing this done by crafty courtiers, whose aim was not only to hide the guilty shedding of innocent blood, under a calumnious charge falsely brought against holy martyrs, but also to have liberty afterwards to proceed unrestrained in their murderous career, without exciting in others any feeling of compassion, I thought that if I did not oppose them to the utmost of my ability, my silence might justly be condemned as perfidy. The occasion of my publishing the *Institutes* was this: first, That I might wipe off a foul affront from my brethren, whose death was precious in the sight of the Lord; and, secondly, That as the same sufferings were impending over many others, at least some interest and sympathy for them might be excited in foreign nations. The work then published was not the dense and laboured volume which now exists, but only a short *Manual*: my



sole object being to bear testimony to the faith of those whom I saw iniquitously assailed by wicked and perfidious flatterers. Moreover, whether in publishing it I hunted after fame was manifest from my early departure, especially as no person there knew me to be the author. The fact I always concealed in other places, and I was still in the same intention, till arriving at Geneva," &c.

The whole of the above interesting narrative well deserved to be quoted ; but the argument drawn from it to prove that the edition of 1536 is not the first, is founded on the two last sentences. If no person at Basle knew that Calvin was the author ; if the fact was latent even after the publication, so that Calvin was still able to conceal it in other places, and continue in the intention of doing so, the edition to which he refers could not have had his name on the title-page. There must either have been no name there at all, or a fictitious name.

Were this argument sound, it would certainly prove that the edition of 1536 is not the first, since the title-page (see fac-simile, No. I. Appendix) expressly bears, "*Joanne Calvino, Noviodunensi autore.*" At the same time, some very extraordinary results would follow. To some of these it will here be necessary to attend.

The exact time when Calvin reached Basle is not known, but it can be proved to demonstration, that it must have been subsequent to January 1535. That year was ushered in at Paris with a monstrous procession, in which the principal part was performed by Francis I., who, more in the character of a blinded heathen despot than of a Christian monarch, walked bareheaded, with a blazing taper in his hand, through the streets of the city, for the purpose of purging it from

what he called execrable heresies, and to make the purgation more complete, caused his arrival at the principal places to be celebrated by throwing a number of martyrs into the flames. Beza states expressly, that these savage martyrdoms were the occasion of Calvin's leaving France. Having first visited Strasburg, and spent some time with Wolfgang Capito, he thereafter proceeded to Basle, where, as appears from the above extract, he had continued for some time before he even thought of preparing his Address to the French King, and prefixing it to the First Edition of the Institutes. He did not on his arrival at Basle forthwith proceed to publish. On the contrary, it is more than doubtful if at that time the text of the Institutes was completed, and even if it was, it is certain that the publication did not take place until the rumour of the martyrdoms of January, spreading into foreign countries, had produced a feeling of deep indignation, and compelled Francis to have recourse to his "improbi ac mendaces libelli," for the purpose of counteracting its interference with his ambitious schemes. Some months must have elapsed before all these things could have happened. How then could time be found for the publication of this fancied First Edition antecedent to that of 1536?

From the last leaf of the edition of 1536, it appears that the printing of it was finished in March of that year,—*Mense Martio, Anno 1536*. The last page of the Preface, or, as it is called, *Epistola Nuncupatoria*, bears date "X. Calendas Septembres," without mentioning the year. It is perfectly clear, however, that it must have been 1535. It could not have been 1534. Some have suggested that year for the first edition, but very absurdly, as Calvin had not then left France, and we have his own explicit statement, that the Institutes were published for the first time when he was residing at Basle. But granting that the missing year could not have been 1534,



may it not have been 1536? The introductory part of a work is not unfrequently the last that is printed; and, therefore, there is nothing incredible in the supposition that though the last part was printed in March, the preface was not printed for some time after. The supposition in the general case is not incredible; and there are circumstances in which it might be difficult, if not impossible, to disprove it. In this particular case, however, it is both incredible and impossible. Had the pagination of the preface and the text been different, or even had the pagination been continuous, and the prefatory matter so short as to enable the printer to calculate within a page how much space it would occupy, though, in the latter case, the continuity of the pagination would have been a very extraordinary operation, there might have been ground to maintain it as a thing possible, that some of the matter first in order was not first in execution, and, therefore, might have borne a posterior date. But to prove that such observations have no applicability here, it is sufficient to mention, that the preface occupies forty-one pages, concluding, of course, on the ninth page of the third sheet, and that the text begins on the forty-second page, forming the reverse of the leaf on which the preface terminates.

Holding it then as certain, that the date in the preface, or *Epistola Nuncupatoria* of the edition 1536, ought to be filled up X. Calendas Septembres (23d August) 1535, (a date, by the way, strikingly confirmed by its identity with that of an early French translation, which is, “De Basle, le vingt troisieme d’Aoust, mil cinq cens trente cinq,”) the only possible time in which the supposed first edition could have been prepared for the press, printed off, and published, is the three or four months which may have elapsed between Calvin’s arrival at Basle, and the 23d August thereafter. The thing is so utterly improbable, that it may be confidently

affirmed, no man could be justified in believing it without an ocular inspection of this earlier first edition—an edition, however, which as yet is only a phantom of the brain, no trace of its actual existence having ever been discovered.

Besides, it is of importance to observe, that in the above passage quoted from the preface to the Psalms, Calvin, to prove that personal fame could not have been his object in publishing the Institutes at Basle, appeals to his early departure, after the publication, “*patuit ex brevi discessu.*” Assuming, then, that there was an edition published previous to August 1535, what becomes of the “early departure?” If the fancied edition was published in June or July, the departure could not, in any proper sense of the term, be early, if it did not take place in the course of the same year. And yet, what is the fact? We find Calvin dating a preface to the Psychopannychia as still resident at Basle in 1536.

We are thus driven to the conclusion, that the edition of Basle, in 1536, is the *first*, and that there must therefore be either some inaccuracy in Calvin’s statement, or some flaw in the argument which employs that statement to prove that the first edition did not contain the author’s name on the title-page.

Even were the former alternative adopted, there would be nothing in it in the least degree derogatory to Calvin. The statement in the preface to the Psalms was made in 1557, twenty-one years after the publication of the Institutes. Would it be at all surprising, that after such a lapse of time, one whose whole life had been occupied with great thoughts and great transactions, should, through forgetfulness, have spoken inaccurately of what, after all, is merely a question of bibliography;—a question which, owing to his

celebrity, has now a deep interest, but which to him must have appeared a very trivial matter indeed? He was perfectly conscious that, in publishing the Institutes, he was actuated by a higher motive than the desire of personal fame. This was the important point; and having stated it, minute accuracy in any collateral explanatory fact, though given strictly according to his impression at the time, was of little consequence.

The difficulty, however, is more apparent than real, and can easily be got quit of without the necessity of imputing even a trivial inaccuracy to Calvin. The inaccuracy is not in him, but in those who would wrest his words to a meaning which he never intended them to convey. It is necessary to attend to the circumstances.

While Calvin is living at Basle, a perfect stranger, a work is published bearing his name on the title-page. Every one is in raptures with it; all are loud in Calvin's praise. Calvin maintains his *incognito*. He sees the popularity of his work, and doubtless rejoices in it, but he never opens his mouth to say to any one, "I am Calvin." Assuming these to be the facts, was it any thing more than a simple unvarnished statement of the truth when Calvin said, "Personal fame could not be my object in the publication. I was a perfect stranger. Nobody in the place knew who I was, and I left the place shortly after without having told it. They all knew from the title-page that John Calvin was the author, but none of them knew that I was that John Calvin;" or, in the very words which he has himself employed, "*nemo illic sciverit me authorem esse*"—"nobody there knew that I was the author." Gerdesius and others, who infer from these words that the edition to which they apply must have had no name on the title-page, or a fictitious one, owe all the plausi-

bility of their argument to an unauthorised substitution. For the *me* in the above sentence they substitute “Joannem Calvinum,” and then interpret as if they stood, “nobody there knew that John Calvin was the author.” As already explained, the two sentences have very different meanings; and it is only by means of the latter, which is altogether unauthorised, that the argument in favour of an earlier first edition is made to assume any semblance of plausibility.

But grant that the word “*me*,” and “Joannem Calvinum,” are in the sense here intended, convertible terms, and that Calvin really meant to state that there was nothing on the title-page of the First Edition which disclosed the fact that he was the author, to what does it amount? Certainly not to a proof of what has already been shown to be scarcely within the limits of possibility—the existence of an edition of the Institutes antecedent to that of 1536. Almost any supposition is more plausible than this; and, therefore, before adopting it, it would even require to be considered whether there may not be some ground for the idea suggested by Clement, that there were two sets of title-pages to the First Edition—the one exhibiting the true name of the author, and the other anonymous, or with a fictitious name, that Calvin’s own copy was of the latter description, and that he naturally supposed it to be the same with all the rest. This supposition becomes less extravagant than at first sight it may appear to be, when it is considered that the double titles conjectured for the First actually exist in the case of the Second Edition, in 1539.

Holding it incontrovertibly established that the Edition printed at Basle in 1536 is truly the first, it will now be proper to furnish such information, with regard to it, as may serve to give a tolerable idea of the original form of this celebrated



work, and of the various changes which it experienced under the hand of its distinguished author during a series of revisals, extending over the long period of twenty-three years.

It is well known that the First Edition is extremely rare. Even the Library of Geneva possesses only a mutilated copy, and not one has been discovered in any public library in England. The whole number of copies known to exist probably does not exceed half a dozen. Fortunately, one of these copies belongs to Mr David Laing, of Edinburgh, who, with his characteristic kindness and liberality, put it at once into the hands of the Translator, with full power to avail himself of it for the benefit of the Calvin Translation Society. It is hoped that the privilege thus bestowed, while it furnishes the means of gratifying a natural and most rational curiosity, may also be made subservient to a higher end.

The First Edition forms a volume in small octavo, of 514 pages, exclusive of the Index, which is placed at the end, and occupies five pages more. For the title-page and its reverse, reference is made to fac-simile No. I. Appendix. The whole work, which is described as one book, is divided into six chapters. These, however, are preceded by the Preface, or, as it is called, *Epistola Nuncupatoria*, which is printed in Roman character, and terminates on the 41st page, the place and date being, as already observed, “Basileæ, X. Calendas Septembres,” without any year. The Preface has undergone revisal like the other parts of the work; but as the variations are pointed out in foot notes in the Translation, it seems unnecessary to advert to them here, farther than to observe, that while almost every sentence contained in the First Edition is still retained, additional sentences have been occasionally introduced, chiefly for the purpose of amplifying the quotations from the Fathers.



The text is printed in *Italic* character, and commences on the 42d page, forming the reverse of the 41st.

The first chapter, entitled "*De Lege, quod Decalogi Explicationem continet,*" commences as follows :—

"Summa fere sacræ doctrinæ duabus his partibus constat, cognitione Dei ac nostri. Hæc vero de Deo nobis in præsentia discenda sunt. Primum, ut certa fide constitutum habeamus, ipsum infinitam esse sapientiam, justitiam, bonitatem, misericordiam, veritatem, virtutem, ac vitam : ut nulla sit prorsus alia sapientia, justitia, bonitas, veritas, virtus, et vita."

After a brief description of The Knowledge of God, under three additional heads, the effect of Original Sin is shortly explained. Of Adam's first condition it is said, "*Parentem omnium nostrum Adam esse creatum ad imaginem et similitudinem Dei, hoc est, sapientia, justitia, sanctitate præditum ; atque his gratiæ donis Deo ita hærentem ut perpetuo in eo victurus fuerit, si in hac integritate naturæ, quam a Deo acceperat, stetisset.*"—(P. 43.) The Fall, and its effects on Adam himself, being then shortly described, it is added, "*Quæ calamitas non in ipsum tantum cecidit, sed in nos quoque defluxit, qui semen ejus sumus ac posteritas. Ergo quicunque in Adam nascimur, omnes Dei ignorantes sumus et expertes, perversi, corrupti, omnisque boni inopes.*"—(P. 44.)

Notwithstanding of this depravity, our obligation to serve God remains entire, and failure in it is without excuse :—

"Quamquam enim sic nati sumus, ut non sit in nobis situm quicquam agere, quod Deo acceptum esse possit ; nec sit in nostra virtute positum illi gratificari ; non tamen desinimus idipsum debere, quod præstare non possumus : quando enim

Dei creaturæ sumus, ejus honori et gloriæ servire debebamus, ac ejus mandatis morem gerere. Nec prætere excusationem, licet, quod facultas desit, et velut exhausti debitores solvendo non simus. Culpa enim nostra est et peccati nostri, quod nos vinctos tenet, ne quod bene aut velimus agere aut possimus.”—(P. 45.)

The second last sentence of this quotation is still to be found verbatim in the last edition ; and as the idea conveyed by it is of frequent recurrence in the Institutes, and forms a fundamental principle in the Calvinistic system, it may be proper, for the purpose of comparison, to give the passage as Calvin finally left it :—

“Nec prætere excusationem licet, quod facultas desit, et velut exhausti debitores, solvendo non simus. Non enim convenit, ut Dei gloriam metiamur ex nostra facultate : qualescunque enim simus, manet illi sui similis semper, amicus justitiæ, iniquitati infensus. Quicquid a nobis exigat, (quia non potest nisi rectum exigere,) ex naturæ obligatione obsequendi necessitas nos manet ; quod autem non possumus, id vitii nostri est. A propria enim cupiditate, in qua peccatum regnat, si vincti tenemur, ne soluti simus in nostri Patris obsequium, non est cur necessitatem pro defensione causemur, ejus malum et intra nos est et nobis imputandum.”—(Inst. Lib. II. c. viii. sec. 2.)

The consideration of The Fall and its consequences naturally leads to that of The Remedy provided by Christ. On this subject the following passage may be quoted :—

“Hæc omnia nobis a Deo offeruntur ac dantur in Christo Domino nostro ; nempe remissio peccatorum gratuita, pax et reconciliatio cum Deo, dona et gratiæ spiritus sancti ; si certa fide ea amplectimur et accipimus, magna fiducia divinæ bonitate innixi, et velut incumbentes ; nihilque hæsitantes,

quin verbum Dei virtus sit et veritas, quod nobis ea omnia pollicetur: denique, si Christo communicamus, in ipso posidemus cœlestes omnes thesauros, ac spiritus sancti dona, quæ nos in vitam ac salutem deducant. Quod nunquam nisi vera vivaque fide assequimur, dum omne nostrum bonum in ipso esse agnoscimus; nos vero nisi in ipso, nihil esse; ac pro certo nobiscum statuimus, in ipso nos filios Dei fieri, regni-que cœlestis hæredes.”—(Pp. 49, 50.)

Another passage, bearing strongly on the same subject, though contained in a different part of the work, may be here introduced:—

“Paulus ait, (1 Cor. iii.,) in architectura Christianæ doctrinæ retinendum fundamentum quod posuit, et præter quod nullum aliud poni potest; quod est Jesus Christus. Quale autem istud est fundamentum? An quod Jesus Christus initium fuit nostræ salutis? et quod viam nobis aperuit, cum nobis meruit occasionem merendi? Minime: sed quod in eo electi ab æterno sumus ante mundi constitutionem, nullo nostro merito, sed secundum propositum beneplaciti Dei: quod ejus morte, ipsi a mortis damnatione redempti, ac liberati a perditione sumus: quod in ipso adoptati a patre sumus, in filios et heredes: quod per ipsius sanguinem patri reconciliati: quod illi a patre in custodiam dati sumus, ne unquam pereamus aut excidamus: quod, ita illi inserti, jam vitæ æternæ quodammodo sumus participes, in regnum Dei per spem ingressi: hoc parum est; quod talem ejus participationem adepti, ut simus adhuc in nobis stulti, ipsi nobis coram Deo sapientia est: ut peccatores simus, ipse est nobis justitia: ut immundi simus, ipse est nobis sanctificatio: ut infirmi simus, ut inermes et sathanæ expositi, ipsi tamen data est potestas in cœlo et in terra, ut pro nobis sathanam conterat, et inferorum portas confringat: ut corpus mortis adhuc nobiscum circumferamus, ipse tamen nobis vita

est. Breviter, quod omnia illius nostra sunt et nos in eo omnia, in nobis nihil."—(Pp. 91, 92.)

On the margin of the above passage, reference is made to Ephes. i.; Rom. ix.; 2 Tim. i.; Joan. i.; Ephes. i., iii.; Rom. v., viii.; 2 Cor. v.; Joan. x., xvii.; 1 Cor. i.; Matth. ult.; Coloss. i., iii.; Rom. viii.; Eph. ii., iv.

With the exception of the last passage, which, as observed, is from a different chapter of the work, all those which have been quoted are contained within the first ten pages of the text, where the subjects of which they treat are disposed of summarily in brief, weighty sentences. It is here that the greatest difference is observable between the first and the last editions of the Institutes. In both the doctrines are the same, but the sentences of the first, though for the most part incorporated verbatim, become in the last a kind of general heads, some of which expand into sections, and even occasionally into whole chapters. Indeed, The Knowledge of God, which here occupies little more than a single page, ultimately becomes the subject of a whole book.

The next part of the first chapter is devoted to an exposition of The Decalogue, the Ten Commandments being taken up in order, and the substance of them explained. The whole of the exposition extends only to twenty pages, and hence several commandments, as the first, fifth, sixth, eighth, and ninth, are each disposed of in two or three sentences. The largest space is devoted to the second and the fourth. In the exposition of the second, the subject chiefly dwelt upon is The Worship of Images. In the later editions, this subject, though adverted to under the Second Commandment, was deemed of sufficient importance to have a separate chapter devoted to it, and it is somewhat curious to see how Calvin,



in preparing this chapter, instead of writing it anew, goes back to the original exposition of the first edition, and to a great extent incorporates it *verbatim*. The mode in which this is done will be understood from the following specimen, in which the first and last editions are given in separate columns, and the differences between them printed in italics.

*First Edition.*

“Huc advertant, qui *execrabilem idololatriam*, qua multis ante hac seculis vera religio submersa subversaque fuit, *misero prætextu defendere conantur*. Imagines, inquit, pro diis non reputantur. Nec tam prorsus incogitantes erant Judæi, ut non meminissent Deum fuisse, cujus manu educti essent ex Ægypto, antequam fabricarent vitulum.

Nec ita stupidi fuisse ethnici credendi sunt, ut non intelligerent Deum *aliud* esse quam ligna, *aut* lapides. Mutabant enim pro arbitrio simulacra: *eosdem semper Deos* animo retinebant: et multa uni Deo *dicata* erant simulacra; nec *tamen tot sibi Deos* fingeant, *quot simulacra essent*. Præterea nova quotidie consecrabant: nec putabant tamen se novos facere Deos.

*Last Edition.*

Huc *animum* advertant, qui *ad defensionem* execrabilis idololatriæ qua multis antehac, seculis vera religio submersa subversaque fuit, *miseros prætextus aucupantur*. Non reputantur, inquit, pro diis imagines. Nec tam prorsus incogitantes erant Judæi, ut non meminissent Deum fuisse, cujus manu educti essent ex Ægypto antequam fabricarent vitulum. *Quin Aaroni dicenti, illos esse Deos a quibus liberati essent terra Ægypti, intrepide annuebant, non dubia significatione, velle se retinere illum Deum liberatorem, modo præeuntem in vitulo conspicerent*. Nec ita stupidi fuisse ethnici credendi sunt, ut non intelligerent Deum *aliū* esse, quam ligna et lapides. Mutabant enim pro arbitrio simulacra; Deos semper eosdem animo retinebant; et multa *erant* uni Deo simulachra, nec *pro multitudine complures tamen Deos sibi* fingeant; præterea nova quotidie consecrabant, nec putabant tamen se novos facere Deos. *Legantur excusationes, quas ab idololatriæ sui seculi prætextas refert Augustinus; nempe quum arguerentur, respondebant vulgares, se non visibile illud colere, sed numen quod illic invisibiliter habitabat. Qui vero purgationis, ut ipse loquitur, religionis erant, nec simulachrum, nec dæmonium se colere aiebant: sed per effigiem corpoream intueri ejus rei signum, quam colere deberent*. Quid ergo? Omnes idololatræ, sive



ex Judæis, sive ex gentibus Deum talem esse persuasum habuerunt, qualem mentis suæ vanitas concepisset. Ad hanc vanitatem addita est improbitas: qualem intus finxerant, ex presserunt. Mens igitur idolum genuit, manus peperit,

nihilominus et Deum æternum Judæi, unum verumque cœli ac terræ Dominum, sub talibus simulacris se colere arbitrabantur; et gentes, suos (licet falsos) Deos, quos tamen in cœlo habitare fingerent.

*Ad hæc non crediderunt, Deum sibi adesse, nisi carnaliter se præsentem exhiberet.*

*Ut huic cæcæ cupiditati obsequerentur erexerunt signa, in quibus Deum sibi præ oculis carnalibus observari crederent. Cum vero Deum se in illis intueri arbitrarentur, et ipsum quoque in illis coluerunt. Tandem toti et animis et oculis illic affixi, magis obbrutescere cœperunt; et quasi aliquid divinitatis inesset, ob-*

ex Judæis, sive ex gentibus non aliter quam dictum est, fuerunt animati. Spirituali intelligentia non contenti, certio-rem ac propiorem ex simulachris expressum iri sibi putabant. Postquam semel placuit præpostera ista Dei assimilatio, nullus finis factus, donec novis subinde præstigiis delusi, in imaginibus Deum vim suam exerere opinarentur. Nihilominus et Deum æternum Judæi, unum verumque cœli ac terræ Dominum, sub talibus simulachris persuasi erant se colere: et gentes, suos licet falsos deos, quos tamen in cœlo habitare fingerent, (Lib. I. c. xi. s. 9.) “*Ad hæc mala accedit nova improbitas quod homo qualem intus concepit Deum, exprimere opere tentat. Mens igitur idolum gignit: manus parit. Hanc esse idololatricæ originem quod homines Deum sibi adesse, nisi carnaliter exhibeat se præsentem, prodit Israelitarum exemplum. Nescimus, dicebant quid isti Mosi contigerit: fac nobis Deos, qui nos præcedant. Deum quidem esse noverant cujus experti virtutem in tot miraculis: sed propinquum sibi esse non confidebant, nisi oculis cernerent corporeum vultus ejus symbolum, quod sibi testimonium esset gubernantis Dei. A præeunte ergo imagine volebant cognoscere Deum itineris sibi esse ducem. Id quotidiana experientia docet, inquietam semper esse carnem, donec sibi simile figmentum nacta est, in quo pro Dei imagine inaniter soletur. Omnibus fere a condito mundo seculis, huic cæcæ cupiditati ut obsequerentur homines, erexerunt signa, in quibus Deum sibi præ oculis carnalibus observari credebant. Tale figmentum sequitur protinus adoratio: quum enim Deum se homines in simulachris intueri arbitrarentur et ipsum quoque illic coluerunt. Tandem toti et animis et oculis illic affixi magis obbrutes-*

stupescere et admirari. Hoc qui ante hac factum, et nostra etiam memoria fieri negant, *imprudenter* mentiuntur. Cur enim coram illis prosternuntur? Cur sese ad illa, precaturi, tanquam ad *aures Dei* convertunt?

Cur pro illis, tanquam pro aris et focus, ad cædes usque et strages digladiantur? ut facilius latruri sint Deum unum sibi eripi, quam sua idola. Et tamen nondum crassos vulgi errores (qui pene infiniti sunt, et omnium fere corda occupant) enumero: tantum indico, quod ipsi profitentur, *cum* se maxime ab idolatria purgare volunt. Non vocamus, inquit, nostros Deos. Neque illi, aut Judæi, aut Gentiles, vocabant: *sed signa duntaxat, et Deorum simulacra*. Et tamen prophetæ, et omnes scripturæ, illis fornicationes cum ligno et lapide exprobrare non desinebant: tantum ob ea, quæ quotidie ab his fiunt, qui Christiani haberi volunt: nempe, quod Deum in ligno et lapide carnaliter venerabantur. *Ultimum effugium est, quod aiunt esse libros idiotarum. Id ut concedamus (quanquam vanissimum est, cum certo certius sit, non in alium usum prostare, quam ut adorentur) non tamen video quem fructum afferre possint idiotis imagines*

cere cœperunt et quasi aliquid divinitatis inesset obstupescere et admirari,” (Lib. I. c. xi. s. 8, ad fin. et 9.) “Hoc qui antehac factum, et nostra etiam memoria fieri negant, *impudenter* mentiuntur. Cur enim coram illis prosternuntur? Cur sese ad illa, precaturi, tanquam ad *Dei aures* convertuntur? *Siquidem verum est, quod ait Augustinus, Neminem orare vel adorare sic intuentem simulachrum, qui non sic afficiatur, ut ab eo exaudiri se putet, vel sibi præstari, quod desiderat, sperat. Cur inter ejusdem Dei simulachra tantum discrimen, ut altero præterito, aut vulgariter honorato, alterum omni solemniori honore prosequantur? Cur in visendis simulachris, quorum similia domi suæ habent, votivis peregrinationibus se fatigant? Cur pro illis hodie, tanquam pro aris et focus, ad cædes usque et strages digladiantur ut facilius latruri sint unicum Deum sibi eripi, quam sua idola? Et tamen nondum crassos vulgi errores (qui pene infiniti sunt, et omnium fere corda occupant) enumero: tantum indico quod ipsi profitentur, *quum* se maxime ab idololatria purgare volunt. Non vocamus, inquit, nostros deos. Neque illi aut Judæi, aut Gentiles olim vocabant; et tamen prophetæ *passim* illis fornicationes cum ligno et lapide exprobrare non desinebant; tantum ob ea quæ quotidie ab iis fiunt qui Christiani haberi volunt, nempe quod Deum in ligno et lapide carnaliter venerabantur,” (Lib. I. c. xi. s. 10.) “*Quare, si quid frontis habent Papistæ, ne posthac effugio isto utantur, libros esse idiotarum imagines; quod tam aperte pluribus Scripturæ testimoniis refellitur. Tametsi ut hoc illis concedam, ne sic quidem multum profecerint pro idolis suis tuendis. Cujusmodi portenta pro Deo obtrudant notum**

(*præsertim quibus Deum effigiare volunt nisi ut faciant anthropomorphitas*. Quas vero *sanctis statuunt*, quid *nisi sunt* perditissimi luxus et obscœnitatis exemplaria? ad quæ si quis se formare vellet, fustuario dignus sit. Equidem lupanaria pudicius et modestius cultas meretrices ostendunt, quam templa eas, quas volunt *virginum videri* imagines. Componant ergo *suas imagines* vel ad modicum saltem pudorem: ut paulo verecundius mentiantur, alicujus sanctitatis libros esse. Sed tum *etiam* respondebimus, non hanc esse docendi *populi Dei* rationem; quem longe alia doctrina, quam istis nœniis, institui *voluit Dominus*. Verbi sui prædicationem, communem omnibus doctrinam *proposuit*.

Quorsum *itaque* *pertinebat* erigi tot cruces ligneas, lapideas, argenteas, *etiam* et aureas; si illud *sæpe* inculcatur, Christum esse *traditum* propter *delicta nostra*, ut in cruce maledictionem nostram sustineret *et* peccata nostra ablueret? ex quo uno verbo

*est*. Quas vero *sanctas picturas vel statuas dicant*, quid *sunt nisi* perditissimi luxus et obscœnitatis exemplaria? ad quæ, si quis formare se vellet, fustuario dignus sit. Equidem lupanaria pudicius et modestius cultas meretrices ostendunt, quam templa eas quas volunt censi virginitatis imagines. *Martyribus* *nihil* *decentiorem* *figunt* *habitum*. Componant ergo *sua idola* vel ad modicum saltem pudorem, ut paulo verecundius mentiantur alicujus sanctitatis libros esse. Sed tum *quoque* respondebimus, non hanc esse *in sacris locis* docendi *fidelis populi* rationem: quem longe alia doctrina quam istis nœniis *illic* institui *vult Deus*. In verbi sui prædicatione et *sacris mysteriis* communem *illic* omnibus doctrinam *proponi* *jussit*; *in* *quam* *sedulo* *intentum* *sibi* *animum* *esse* *produnt*, qui oculis ad idola contemplanda circumaguntur. Quos ergo vocant *Papistæ*, idiotas, quorum ruditas solis imaginibus doceri sustineat? Hos scilicet quos *pro suis discipulis* agnoscit Dominus: quos *cælestis suæ Philosophiæ* *revelatione* dignatur; quos *salutaribus regni suis mysteriis* *vult* *erudiri*. Fateor quidem, ut res habet, hodie esse non paucos qui talibus libris carere nequeant. Sed unde, quæso, isthæc stupiditas, nisi quod ea doctrina fraudantur, quæ sola erat ad eos formandos idonea? Neque enim alia de causa, qui præerant *Ecclesiis*, resignarunt idolis docendi vices, nisi quia ipsi muti erant. Christum vera Evangelii prædicatione depingi, et quodammodo ob oculos nostros crucifigi testatur Paulus. Quorsum igitur attinebat tot passim in templis cruces erigi, ligneas, lapideas, argenteas, et aureas, si probe et fideliter illud inculcatur Christum esse mortuum ut in cruce maledictionem nostram sustineret, peccata nostra expiaret corporis

plus discere poterant, quam ex mille crucibus ligneis aut lapideis. Nam in aureas et argenteas, avari mentes et oculos tenacius forte defigunt, quam in ulla Dei verba. *Et quos quæso* vocant idiotas? Hos scilicet quos Dominus *theodidactos* agnoscit.”—(P. 53, 54.)

*sui sacrificio, sanguineque* ablueret, nos denique reconciliaret Deo patri? Ex quo uno plus discere poterant quam ex mille crucibus ligneis aut lapideis: nam in aureas et argenteas avari mentes et oculos tenacius forte defigunt, quam in ulla Dei verba.”—(Supra, sec. 7.)

From the above extracts, which furnish a far better idea of the nature of the changes which the Work has undergone than any other mode of explanation could have given, it appears that the whole of the original text, with the exception of two or three sentences, is preserved entire in the last edition. These extracts are believed to form a fair average specimen of both editions, and so far discountenance the idea, which appears to be not unfrequently entertained, that the first edition was as defective in quality as in bulk. On the contrary, the quality was such that even Calvin despaired of being able to improve it, and accordingly left it as it originally fell from his pen—an enduring monument of his consummate ability, and a striking confirmation of the remark which has been made, that, when his opinions on any subject were formed and expressed, it was after such careful and thorough investigation as made it unnecessary for him afterwards to alter them.

After the exposition of the Decalogue several collateral topics are briefly discussed. In regard to the great end of the Commandments, the following passage, though given with some variations in the last edition, deserves to be quoted:—

“Facile autem est perspicere quo tendant omnia: nempe ad docendum charitatem. Ac primum, ut Deum timeamus, amemus, colamus, ipso confidamus, ipsum invocemus ac requiramus, ab ipso omnia expectemus, in ipso præsidia nostra collocemus, in ipso quiescamus: quæ summa est



primæ tabulæ, qua ad pietatem peculiariter instituimur. Deinde, ut propter Deum, charitatem cum aliis colamus: ita cum omnibus agendo, ut nobiscum agi optemus: quod est secundæ tabulæ caput: non autem ut nos ipsos amemus. Neque enim in tota lege syllaba una legitur, quæ regulam homini de iis statuatur, quæ suo commodo factururus aut omissurus sit. Et sane quando ita nati sunt homines, ut in amorem sui toti proni ferantur; nulla fuit opus lege, quæ amorem illum sponte sua immodicum magis inflammaret. Quo plane perspicuum est, non nostri ipsorum amorem, sed Dei et proximi, observationem mandatorum esse: optimeque ac sanctissime eum vivere qui, quam minime fieri potest, sibi vivit ac studet: neminem vero eo pejus nec iniquius vivere, qui sibi duntaxat vivit ac studet, suaque duntaxat cogitat ac quærit.”—(Pp. 72, 73.)

The spirituality of the law, and the perfect obedience required by it, are next adverted to, and as a necessary consequence of these, the absurdity of the scholastic distinction between precepts and counsels, and of the dogmas of satisfactions and works of supererogation. Here it is observed: “Jubet itaque Dominus nos sincere statuere, et nobiscum reputare, nulla nos sibi præstare gratuita officia, sed debita obsequia reddere. Idque, cum fecerimus quæcunque præcipiuntur nobis: hoc est, si omnes nostræ cogitationes omniaque membra versa essent in officia legis: vel si plus quam omnes omnium hominum justitiæ, unius essent. Isti, qui longissime ab eo absunt, ut fecerint quæ præcepta sunt: audent tamen gloriari se cumulum addidisse ad justam mensuram. Sed facile scilicet et cuivis in promptu est, hæc in sellis et cathedris sub umbra disputare. Cum autem summus ille Judex pro tribunali sederit, omne os obstrui et omnem gloriationem evanescere oportebit. Hoc, hoc quærendum erat, quam ad ejus tribunal defensionis fiduciam



adferre, non quid in scholis et angulis fabulari possimus. Ad hæc, quales sunt, quas isti venditare Deo volunt supererogationes? Nugæ quas neque Deus unquam jussit, neque approbat; nec cum reddenda erit apud se ratio, acceptas feret. Hac demum significatione concedemus esse supererogationis opera, utpote de quibus a propheta dictum est: Quis quæsivit hæc de manibus vestri?"—(Pp. 81, 82.)

The uses of the law are explained under the three following heads: "Primum, ut dum justitiam Dei ostendit, hoc est, quam a nobis Deus exigit, suæ unumquemque injustitiæ admoneat, ac peccati convincat."—(P. 88.) "Deinde, quatenus Deum fore ultorem declarat, pœnam transgressoribus constituit, mortem ac judicium minatur; huc prodest, ut qui nulla justî rectique cura, nisi coacti, tanguntur, coerceantur saltem pœnarum formidine."—(P. 89.) "Postremo et fidelibus, quorum in cordibus jam viget ac regnat Dei Spiritus, non mediocrem usum adfert; dum eos magis ac magis assidue admonet, quid rectum sit, et placitum coram Domino."—(P. 90.)

On this last head it is observed: "In summa, lex fidelibus exhortatio est: non quæ eorum conscientiam maledictione liget, sed quæ pigritiam subinde instando excutiat, et imperfectionem vellicet. Multi, cum vellent significare hanc a legis maledictione liberationem, dixerunt abrogatam esse legem fidelibus; non quod non amplius illis jubeat quod rectum est: sed duntaxat, ne sit illis quod antea erat, hoc est, ne eorum conscientias mortis nuncio confundat et perterreat, ne damnet et perdat. Quemadmodum contra, justificatio bonis operibus detrahitur; non ut nulla bona fiant opera, aut negentur bona opera quæ sunt; sed ne illis fidamus, ne gloriemur, ne salutem adscribamus. Fiducia enim hæc nostra est, quod Christus filius Dei noster est, nobisque datus: ut

in ipso simus et nos filii Dei regnique cœlestis hæredes : Dei benignitate, non nostra arte, vocati in spem æternæ salutis. Vocati autem sumus non ad immunditiam, et iniquitatem, sed ut simus mundi et immaculati in conspectu Dei nostri, in charitate. Hæc si quo oportuerat ordine, tractata digestaque essent anteactis seculis, nunquam tantum turbarum ac dissensionum ortum esset.”—(Pp. 90, 91.)

The last subject adverted to is the dogma of human merit, and the whole chapter concludes as follows :—

“ Verum, si quis vel minimam salutis nostræ portionem ad opera derivet, is totam scripturam pervertit ac corrumpit, quæ solidam laudem divinæ bonitati assignat. Nomen vero meriti qui usurpat, adversus Dei gratiam blasphemiam erigit : quæ cum illo stare non potest : certe arrogantiae et ferocientis adversus Deum vanitatis plenum est. Deus mercedem et remunerationem pollicetur. Audio : sed nostrum erat, tantæ Dei beneficentiæ gratias agere, per quam nobis dari agnosceremus, quod minime debebatur ; non animis eferri, et plus arripere quam dabatur. Qui usum fructum in fundo dono accepit, si fundi etiam proprietatem sibi vindicet, nonne tali ingratitude illum ipsum quem possidebat usum fructum amittere meretur ? Et nos scilicet impune adversus tantam suam gratiam tam ingratos Dominus feret ?”—(P. 101.)

The Second Chapter, entitled, “ De Fide, ubi et symbolum (quod Apostolicum vocant) explicatur,” after a brief recapitulation proceeds to explain the nature of faith. “ Id quod ex symbolo (quod Apostolicum vocant) facile discemus : quo breviter compendium collectum est, et quasi epitome quædam fidei, in quam consentit Ecclesia catholica.” It states, “ duas esse fidei formas.” The one is, “ si quis credat Deum esse : historiam quæ de Christo narratur, veram esse arbitretur : quale est nobis iudicium de iis, quæ vel olim gesta nar-

rantur, vel ipsi præsentēs spectavimus.” This faith is of so little importance as to be unworthy of the name,—“de qua si quis gloriatur, intelligat eam si habere cum diabolis communem.” The other faith is, that “qua non modo Deum et Christum esse credimus; sed etiam in Deum credimus, et Christum, vere ipsum pro Deo nostro, ac Christum pro Salvatore agnoscentes.”—(P. 103.)

The nature of Faith being explained, the subject of the Trinity is next considered, the object being, “non autem cum pugnacibus et rebellibus manum conferre,” (p. 106,) but only briefly to point out “quid sequendum hac in parte sit, quid cavendum,—ut habeant qui faciles apertasque veritati aures dederint, in quo certo pede consistent,” (p. 107.) In the course of the discussion, an objection to the use of certain terms is thus stated: “Oblatrant hæretici, quod, ουσΙΑ, ὑΠΟΣΤΑΣΕΙΣ, *essentia, personæ*, conficta sunt hominum arbitrio nomina, nusquam in scripturis lecta aut visa.” And again, “Satiù foret, inquirunt, non modo sensa nostra, sed verba etiam intra scripturæ fines continere: quam exotica verba spargere, quæ dissensionum ac jurgiorum seminaria futura sint.”—(P. 110.)

The answer is, “Si verbum exoticum appellant, quod totidem syllabis compositum in Scriptura ostendi non possit, iniquam sane legem nobis imponunt; qua damnantur omnes conciones, quæ Scripturæ contextu non consarcinantur. Sin exoticum illis est, quod curiose excogitatum superstitiose defenditur; quod ad contentionem magis quam ad ædificationem valet, quod vel importune, vel nullo fructu usurpatur; quod sua asperitate pias aures offendit; quod a verbi Dei simplicitate abstrahit; eorum sobrietatem toto animo complector. . . . . Sed quid vetat, quominus quæ captui nostro perplexa in Scripturis impeditaque sunt, ea verbis planioribus edisseramus? quæ tamen religione et fideliter ipsius scripturæ veritati serviant, et parce modesteque, nec



*citra occasionem usurpentur.*"—(P. 111.) In support of this practice, it is said that examples are occurring every day. These examples, the latter especially, as containing the germ of great truths, which when afterwards expanded became distinguishing features in the Calvinistic system, deserve to be quoted.

The first example is thus stated :—"Sæpe de fidei justitia disputatur ; pauci assequuntur, quomodo fiamus justi fide. Addamus hanc esse Christi justitiam, non nostram ; in ipso non in nobis sitam ; sed imputatione nostram fieri, quoniam accepta nobis fertur. Ita non vere nos esse justos, sed imputative ; vel non esse justos, sed pro justis imputatione haberi, quatenus Christi justitiam per fidem possidemus, res plana erit et expedita."

The other example is as follows :—

"Dicitur Deus in reprobis operari, quorum opera damnata sunt : difficilis et involuta quæstio. An Deus autor sit peccati ? an malum Deo sit imputandum ? an injustitia opus ejus censi debet ? Subjiciamus, in eodem facto respiciendum perversi hominis, ac justi Dei opus. Hominem reprobum, mali radicem in se habere fixam, a se malum cogitare, a se velle, a se conari, a se perpetrare. Ideo illi imputandum, quicquid in opere mali ac culpæ est. Quia consilio, voluntate, facto, contra Deum nititur. Deum vero, malam voluntatem, ac malum conatum, quo vult inflectere, nunc coercere ac moderari : nunc successum dare, et vires addere : sed omnia juste." After referring to the cases of Pharaoh, Nebuchadnezzar, and Sennacherib, the text proceeds : "Omnes ab eo vocati, suscitati, impuls, denique ejus ministri. Sed quid ? dum efferatæ suæ libidini obsequebantur, justitiæ Dei inscii serviebant. En Deus, et illi, ejusdem operis autores : sed in eodem opere elucet Dei justitia, eorum



iniquitas. Hac distinctione implicitus ille nodus dissolvitur.”  
—(Pp. 111-113.)

The only other quotation which it seems necessary to give from the second chapter is the following, relating to final perseverance :—

“Cum autem ecclesia sit populus electorum Dei : fieri non potest ut qui vere ejus sunt membra, tandem pereant aut malo exitio perdantur. Nititur enim eorum salus tam certis solidisque fulcris, ut etiam si tota orbis machina labefactetur, concidere ipsa et corruere non possit. Primum, stat cum Dei electione : nec, nisi cum æterna illa sapientia, variare aut deficere potest. Titubare ergo et fluctuari, cadere etiam possunt ; sed non colliduntur : quia Dominus supponit manum suam : id est quod ait Paulus : Sine pœnitentia esse dona et vocationem Dei. Deinde quos Dominus elegit, eos Christo filio suo in fidem ac custodiam tradidit : ut neminem ex illis perderet, sed resuscitaret omnes in novissimo die. Sub tam bono custode et errare ac labi possunt, perdi certe non possunt.”—(Pp. 139, 140.)

The Third Chapter is entitled, “De Oratione ubi et Oratio Dominica enarratur.” In this chapter the following passage occurs :—

“Porro, esto hæc prima probæ orationis lex, ut omni gloriæ nostræ cogitatione nos abdicemus, ut omnem nostræ dignitatis opinionem exuamus, ut omni nostra fiducia decedamus : dantes gloriam in abjectione nostri, ac humilitate nostra Domino, ut prophetica doctrina admonemur : *Non in justitiis nostris coram te fundimus preces, sed in misericordiis tuis, magnis : Exaudi nos Domine, Domine propitius sis nobis : Exaudi nos et fac quæ petimus propter te ipsum, quia invocatum est nomen tuum super populum tuum, et super locum sanctum tuum.* Alter vero propheta scribit : *Anima tristis et desolata super magnitudine*

*mali, curva et infirma, anima famelica, et oculi deficientes, dant tibi gloriam Domine. Non secundum justitias patrum fundimus preces in conspectu tuo, et coram facie tua petimus misericordiam Domine Deus noster. Sed quia tu es misericors miserere nostri : quia peccavimus contra te.”—(Pp. 158, 159.)*

The above passage has been quoted not so much for its intrinsic value, as for the inference which seems to be fairly deducible from it, that at the time when it was written, Calvin was not perfectly satisfied that one at least of the books which all Protestants now regard as Apocryphal was not entitled to a place in the Canon.

The two passages here printed in italics are quotations, the one from Daniel ix. 18, 19, and the other from Baruch ii. 18. They are referred to as evidences of prophetic doctrine (*prophetica doctrina*) on a certain point; and, in particular, the latter passage is introduced by the words, “Alter vero propheta scribit:” thus placing the book which bears the name of Baruch on the very same footing with that of Daniel. This can scarcely be the result of mere inadvertence. For in the very first chapter of this first edition of the Institutes Baruch is referred to, without any note of distinction, along with the Epistle of James; and, moreover, in the Psychopannychia, published in 1534, Baruch iii. 14 is quoted in the same way, the quotation being introduced thus: “Sic enim loquitur Propheta, quum vult ostendere fontem vitæ esse apud Deum.” It would seem, however, that even at the date of the Psychopannychia, Calvin had begun to doubt the genuineness of Baruch; for a subsequent quotation from Baruch ii. 17 is thus introduced:—“Hanc sententiam plane confirmat oratio, quæ est in libro Baruch: saltem qui ejus nomine inscribitur.” Before the second edition of the Institutes in 1539, these doubts had been

in a great measure confirmed; for, in quoting the passage above printed in italics, instead of the words, "*Alter vero propheta scribit,*" the following sentence is substituted:—"Verissime enim simul ac sanctissime scriptum est (a quocunque tandem sit) quod ab incerto auctore scriptum, Prophetæ Baruch tribuitur."

The point is not of much importance in itself, but possesses some degree of interest as tending to show, that when Calvin adopted the Reformed Doctrine, he did not at once abandon all his previous erroneous opinions, but parted with them gradually as he received new measures of light.

The length to which the quotations have already extended makes it necessary to confine those from the three remaining chapters within narrower compass, though it must be confessed that some of the points discussed in them are considered even of more engrossing interest now than at the time when Calvin wrote.

The Fourth Chapter is entitled, "*De Sacramentis, ubi de Baptismo et Cœna Domini.*" A sacrament is defined alternatively:—"Signum externum quo bonam suam ergo nos voluntatem Dominus nobis repræsentat, ac testificatur ad sustinendam fidei nostram imbecillitatem," or "testimonium gratiæ Dei, externo symbolo nobis declaratum." Two definitions are likewise given in the last edition. The one is, "externum symbolum, quo benevolentiæ erga nos suæ promissiones conscientiis nostris Dominus obsignat, ad sustinendam fidei nostræ imbecillitatem; et nos vicissim pietatem erga eum nostram tam coram eo et angelis quam apud homines testamur;" and the other, "divinæ in nos gratiæ testimonium externo signo confirmatum, cum mutua nostræ erga ipsum pietatis testificatione."



If one may judge from the quantity of matter belonging to this chapter, which has been retained in the last Edition, in consecutive sections, and almost in the very words originally employed, it must at first have been composed with the greatest possible care. One reason for this is very obvious. In the other parts of the work Romish errors alone were combated; here unhappy differences had arisen among the Reformers themselves, and were threatening to break them up into separate and hostile parties. Calvin's whole life shows that no man ever entertained more enlarged views of Christian union, or was more prepared to secure it by yielding, in matters not touching the essentials of religion, to the prejudices even of his brethren. Accordingly, he appears to have endeavoured, while stating the whole truth plainly and boldly, to state it in the most comprehensive form, attaching no undue importance to mere modes of administration, but claiming for himself, and freely conceding to others, full liberty of arrangement in all matters not expressly determined by the authority of Scripture. Here Calvin's views on the subject of Popish baptism deserve to be quoted:—

“*Jam si verum est quod constituimus : sacramentum non ex ejus manu accipiendum esse, a quo administratur : sed velut ex ipsa Dei manu, a quo haud dubie mittitur : inde colligere licet, nihil illi afferri vel auferri, ejus dignitate, per ejus manum traditur : ac perinde atque inter homines, si qua missa epistola fuerit, modo satis et manus et signum agnoscatur, minime refert, quis aut qualis tabellarius fuerit : ita nobis sufficere debet, manum et signum Domini nostri in sacramentis suis agnoscere, a quocunque tabellario deferantur. His Donatistarum error pulchre refutatur, qui vim ac precium sacramenti metiebantur ministri dignitate. Tales hodie sunt Catabaptistæ nostri, qui rite nos baptisatos pernegant, quod ab impiis et idololatræ in regno papali baptisati sumus : itaque anabaptismum furiosi urgent. Adversus quorum in-*



eptias satis valida ratione muniemur, si cogitemus nos baptismo initiatos, non in nomen alicujus hominis ; sed in nomen Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti. Ideoque baptismum non esse hominis sed Dei ; a quocunque tandem administratus fuerit. Ut maxime Dei ignorantes aut contemptores fuerint, qui nos baptisabant : non tamen in suæ ignorantia vel sacrilegii consortium nos tinxerunt, sed in fidem Jesu Christi ; quia non suum, sed Dei nomen invocarunt, nec in aliud nomen nos baptisarunt. Quod si baptismus Dei erat, habuit certe promissionem, de peccatorum remissione, mortificatione carnis, vivificatione spirituali, participatione Christi.”—(Pp. 229, 230.)

In regard to the place and mode of administering baptism, Calvin’s words are as follows :—

“At quanto satius erat, quoties baptisandus aliquis esset in cœtum fidelium ipsum repræsentari et tota ecclesia, velut teste, spectante, et orante super eum, Deo offerri ? recitari fidei confessionem, qua sit instituendus catechumenus ? enarrari, quæ in baptismo habentur, promissiones ? catechumenum baptisari in nomen Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti ? remitti demum cum precibus et gratiarum actione ? Sic nihil omitteretur, quod ad rem faceret ; et una illa ceremonia, quæ a Deo autore profecta est, nullis exoticis sordibus obruta, clarissime effulgeret. Cæterum mergatur ne totus qui tingitur, an infusa tantum aqua aspergatur minimum refert, sed id pro regionum diversitate ecclesiis liberum esse debet. Quanquam et ipsum baptisandi verbum mergere significat, et mergendi ritum veteri ecclesiæ observatum fuisse constat.”—(Pp. 281, 282.)

With regard to the administration of the Lord’s Supper, there is the following passage :—“ Quantum ad sacram cœnam attinet, sic administrare decentissime poterat, si sæ-

pissime, et singulis ad minimum hebdomadibus proponeretur ecclesiæ."

This approval of a very frequent, at the least a weekly celebration, is expressed still more strongly in another passage: "Quæ de sacramento hoc hactenus disseruimus abunde ostendunt, non institutum ideo fuisse, ut semel quotannis acciperetur, idque perfunctorie, ut nunc publici moris est; verum, quo frequenti in usu Christianis omnibus esset, ut frequenti memoria passionem Christi repeterent."—(P. 260.) And again, after referring to the practice of the Apostolic Church, "Sic agendum omnino erat, ut nullus ecclesiæ conventus fieret sine verbo, orationibus, participatione cœnæ et eleemosinis. Hunc et apud Corinthios fuisse institutum ordinem, satis ex Paulo conijcere licet. Et sane hæc consuetudo, quæ semel quotannis communicare jubet, certissimum est diaboli inventum; cujuscunque tandem ministerio invecta fuerit."—(P. 261.)

These sentiments on the subject of frequent communion Calvin always retained. See *Inst. Lib. IV. chap. xvii. sec. 44-47.*

The Fifth Chapter, which is entitled "Sacramenta non esse quinque reliqua quæ pro Sacramentis hactenus vulgo habita sunt, declaratur; tum qualia sint, ostenditur," treats of these spurious sacraments under the separate heads of "De Confirmatione," "De Pœnitentia," "De Ultima (ut vocant) Unctione," "De Ordinibus Ecclesiasticis," "De Matrimonia." Under the head "De Ordinibus Ecclesiasticis," after a refutation of the extravagant and impious pretensions of the Romish priesthood, we meet with the following passage:—

“Nunc quod in manibus est tractemus : a quibus scilicet ordinandi, hoc est vocandi sint ministri ecclesiæ. Quid igitur ? an Paulus jura collationum Timotheo et Tito deferebat, qualia nunc ab infulatis satrapis usurpantur ? minime : sed cum utrique mandatum dedisset de constituendis componendisque provinciarum, in quibus relictæ erant, ecclesiis : alterum hortatur, ne ecclesias desertas patiatur : alterum monet, ne quem admittat nisi probatum. An Paulus et Barnabas, seu metropolitani aliqui, ecclesiarum possessiones conferebant ? Nihil minus. Cæterum non existimo illos omnes, suo arbitrio imposuisse ecclesiis nesciis ac inconsultis quos visum esset : sed communicato cum ecclesiis consilio, ad id munus, vocasse quos ex fratribus exploratos habebant puriore doctrina, et vita integriore. Atque ita quidem factum oportuit, si ecclesias stare incolumes voluissent, penes quos rerum arbitrium erat : ut ecclesia quæ de eligendo ministro deliberatura erat, antequam in consilium ivisset, advocasset e vicinia unum aut duos Episcopos, et vitæ sanctitate, et doctrinæ sinceritate præ aliis spectabiles : cum quibus agitasset, quis potissimum assumendus fuisset. Utrum vero totius ecclesiæ comitiis, aut paucorum suffragiis, quibus ea cura demandetur : an vero magistratus sententia, episcopum creari satius sit : nulla certa lex constitui potest. Sed pro temporum ratione, populorumque moribus capiendum est consilium. Cyprianus fortiter contendit, non rite eligi, nisi communibus totius plebis suffragiis. Quam observationem illo seculo in multis partibus valuisse, fidem historiæ faciunt. Verum quam vix unquam evenit, ut tot capita rem aliquam uno sensu bene componant : et fere illud verum est, incertum scindi studia in contraria vulgus : satius mihi videtur, eo eligendi munere, vel magistratum, vel senatum, vel seniores aliquot defungi : advocatis semper (ut dixi) nonnullis episcopis, quorum fidem et probitatem spectatam habeant. Sed hæc melius prospicere, pro re et tempore, possunt principes, aut liberæ civitates, quibus pietas cordi est. Certe rectam

ordinationem penitus corruperunt cornuti presules, suis juri-  
bus collationum, presentationum, repræsentationum, patrona-  
tuum, et aliis id genus tyrannicis dominiis.”—(Pp. 383, 384.)  
In another passage it is said: “Habebat, inquam, olim optimum  
canonem populus cui verbum Dei præscribebat: Oportere  
episcopum esse irreprehensibilem, doctorem, non pugnacem,  
non avarum, &c. Cur ergo provincia eligendi ministri, a  
populo ad istos præsules translata est? Quia inter tumultus  
et factiones populi, verbum Dei non exaudiebatur. Et cur  
hodie ab episcopis non transferatur: qui nonmodo leges omnes  
violant, sed abjecto pudore, libidinose, avare, ambitiose, hu-  
mana divinis commiscent et confundunt?”—(P. 386.)

The sixth and last chapter is entitled, “De libertate Chris-  
tiana, potestate ecclesiastica, et politica administratione.”  
When we consider the exile which Calvin was now suffering,  
and the cruel persecutions inflicted on his brethren in the  
faith, it is impossible not to admire the strength of Christian  
principle, which alone could enable him to write in such  
terms as the following:—

“Quare si a sævo principe crudeliter torquemur, si ab  
avaro, aut luxurioso rapaciter expilamur, si ab ignavo negli-  
gimur, si ab impio denique, et sacrilego vexamur, ob pietatem:  
subeat primum delictorum nostrorum recordatio, quæ talibus  
haud dubie Domini flagellis castigantur; succurrat et deinde  
hæc cogitatio, non nostrum esse, hujusmodi malis mederi;  
hoc tantum esse reliquum, ut Domini opem imploremus;  
cujus in manu sunt regum corda, et regnorum inclinationes.”  
—(P. 510.)

Lest any one should perversely misconstrue these senti-  
ments, and charge Calvin with flattering kings by incul-  
cating servile obedience even to impious decrees, it will be  
proper to make the above quotation complete, by subjoining  
the passage with which the whole work concludes:—



“ Dominus ergo rex est regum, qui ubi sacrum os aperuit, unus pro omnibus simul ac supra omnes sit audiendus. Iis deinde qui nobis præsunt, hominibus subjecti sumus ; sed non nisi in ipso. Adversus ipsum si quid imperent, nullo sit nec loco, nec numero. Neque hic totam illam, qua magistratus pollent, dignitatem quicquam moremur ; cui injuria nulla fit, dum in ordinem, præ singulari illa vereque summa Dei potestate, cogitur. Scio quantum, quamque præsens huic constantiæ periculum immineat, quod indignissime se contemni reges ferant ; quorum indignatio nuncius est mortis, inquit Solomon. Sed cum istud a cœlesti præcone Petro pronunciatum sit edictum : Obediendum Deo potius, quam hominibus ; hac nos cogitatione consolemur. Illam tum nos præstare, quam Dominus exigit, obedientiam ; dum quidvis perpetimur potius, quam a pietate deflectamus. Et ne nobis labascant animi, alium etiam stimulum Paulus admovet : Nos ideo tanti a Christo redemptos esse, quanti illi constitit nostra redemptio, ne pravis hominum cupiditatibus servos nos addicamus ; multo vero minus, impietati.”—(Pp. 513, 514.)

The extreme rarity of the First Edition of the Institutes, and the importance justly attached to it, are, it is hoped, a sufficient justification of the numerous extracts which have now been given. Some persons knowing nothing more of this Edition than they have learned from the modest terms in which Calvin himself has spoken of it, imagine it to be a mere rude sketch which was scarcely worthy of its author, and soon ceased to be known, because containing little that entitled it to be preserved ; while others, like Bolsec, taking advantage of the general ignorance in regard to it, have represented the changes which it underwent in subsequent editions, as proofs that Calvin in publishing it was a kind of theological adventurer, who had merely thrown off the religious opinions which he had previously entertained, but had

not yet supplied their place by any settled convictions. It has now been shown, in opposition to the erroneous ideas of the former class, and the calumnious misrepresentations of the latter, that the original work was so perfect, that the far greater part of it is still to be found almost unaltered in the last edition; and that the doctrines taught in it had been so carefully considered, and so firmly embraced, that certainly in substance, and almost even in form, they remain unchanged. Indeed, on the supposition that the original work was so very imperfect, how are we to account for the reception which was given to it—a reception so favourable that Calvin himself describes it: “*Eo piorum fere omnium favore . . . . . quem nunquam voto expetere, nedum sperare ausus fuisset;*” and appears immediately to have resolved to make the best return in his power, by labouring still more to perfect it?

It accordingly appears that he soon began to prepare for a Second Edition, but various causes of delay intervened. Shortly after the first publication, he quitted Basle for the purpose of paying a visit to the Duchess of Ferrara, a daughter of Louis XII. of France, and a distinguished patroness of the Reformers; and soon afterwards, having been led as by the immediate hand of Providence to Geneva, was detained by Farel, and appointed one of its ministers. The full occupation of his time by this appointment prevented Calvin from prosecuting his intended new Edition of the Institutes; but the rash, headstrong, and ungrateful conduct of the leading party in Geneva, having driven him again into exile, he returned to Strasburg, where the Second Edition was at length completed, and published in 1539.

In publishing the First Edition, the chief thing which Calvin had in view, was to provide an elementary treatise, “*rudi-*

menta quædam tradere;" but his appointment at Strasburg to the office of Theological Professor appears to have determined him to change the original destination of the work, to enlarge its dimensions, and give it a more systematic form. Accordingly, in the preface to the Second Edition, he distinctly states this, and says, "Porro hoc mihi in isto labore propositum fuit: sacræ theologiæ candidatos ad divini verbi lectionem ita preparare et instruere, ut et facilem ad eam aditum habere, et inoffenso in ea gradu pergere queant."

In this edition, the small octavo of the first swells into a folio, the original quantity of matter being rather more than doubled, and the six chapters are expanded into seventeen. Of these, however, the greater part are merely new subdivisions, so that the whole number of additional chapters is only six, viz., the two first, "De Cognitione Dei," "De Cognitione Hominis et Libero Arbitrio;" and then, in succession, the fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth, entitled, respectively, "De Pœnitentia," "De Justificatione Fidei et Meritis Operum," "De Similitudine et Differentia Veteris ac Novi Testamenti," "De Prædestinatione et Providentia Dei."

This edition is, like the first, extremely rare; and one extraordinary circumstance with regard to it is, that it appears to have had two sets of title-pages, the one bearing the true name, "Joanne Calvino, autore," and the other the fictitious name, "Autore Alcuino." The fact appeared so incredible both to Basnage and Bayle, that they ventured to give it a flat denial, maintaining that it was mere vulgar rumour. Gerdesius, in his tract, "De Johannis Calvini Institutionis Religionis Christianæ Historia Literaria," proves the existence of the fictitious title, by a quotation from Liebe's "Diatribæ de Pseudonomia Joannis Calvini. Amst. 1723," in which Liebe says, that after he had searched a

great number of libraries for copies of the edition of 1539, and almost despaired of finding one, he at length came to the knowledge of two copies, one at London, in the private library of David Durand, minister of the French Church there, bearing the true name; and another in the library of the Sorbonne at Paris, with a title differing from the former, only in substituting for the true name, "Autore Alcuino."

The Calvin Translation Society are enabled, by the kindness of the Rev. Dr Watson, late of Burntisland, who possesses a copy with the fictitious name, to present their subscribers with a fac-simile of the first leaf of this very rare edition. (See Appendix, Fac-simile, No. I.)

What could be the inducement to adopt this fictitious name it is difficult to conjecture. Liebe supposes that it may have been a device, either of Calvin himself, or of the bookseller, to obtain a circulation for the Work in the Romish Church as well as among the Reformers. If this was the object, it seems to have so far succeeded with the Sorbonne, who, in all probability, when they placed it on their shelves, had no idea of the dangerous company to which they were introducing their angelic doctors.

It is impossible, however, to believe that Calvin had any part in this pious fraud. There is nothing from which his nature was more abhorrent; and even had he been capable of doing the thing, he would surely have done it more effectually. The first page bears, as has been said, "Autore Alcuino," and the address on the third page, on which the Preface commences, is, "Potentissimo Illustrissimoque Monarchæ Magno Francorum Regi, Principi ac Domino suo, Alcuinus," thus leaving it doubtful whether the monarch meant may not have been Charlemagne, and Alcuinus the



writer of that name who flourished in his reign ; but the very first page of the text, which, unlike the first edition, begins with a new pagination, completely dispels the delusion, the title being

CHRISTIANÆ  
RELIGIONIS INSTITUTIO,  
*Per Joannem Calvinum.*

This edition, which was printed at Strasburg, “Argen-  
torati per Vuendelinum Rihelium, Mense Augusto, Anno  
M.D.XXXIX.,” is said to have been succeeded by a third  
edition, published by the same printer in 1543. It would  
seem that the work had again undergone revisal, and received  
considerable additions ; but from the description given of it,  
it appears to be, in every respect, the same as an edition  
which was published by the same printer in 1545, and for  
the use of which the Calvin Translation Society are indebted,  
as they have been on many other occasions, to the Rev. Dr  
John Brown of the United Secession Church.—(See Appen-  
dix, Fac-simile, No. III.)

One of the peculiarities on the title-page of this edition is  
a commendatory notice, in which John Sturmius vouches  
(it must surely have been at the request only of the pub-  
lisher) that “John Calvin is a man endued with a most  
acute judgment, very great learning, and an excellent memory,  
and is, as a writer, flowing, copious, and pure ; evidence of  
this is the Institutes of the Christian Religion, which he pub-  
lished first inchoate, thereafter enriched, but this year com-  
plete ; and I know not if there exists any thing of this  
description more perfect for teaching religion, correcting  
manners, and removing errors. Let him who has mastered  
the things delivered in this volume deem himself most excel-  
lently instructed.”

The Epistle to the Reader is the very same as in the edition of 1539, with the addition of the following quotation subjoined to the Epistle :—

“Augustini Epistola 7.

“Ego ex eorum numero me esse profiteor, qui scribunt proficiendo, et scribendo proficiunt.”

To the summary of Contents the following notice is appended :—

“Hæc omnia, perspicue ac solide in hisce Institutionibus tractantur, et quicquid adversarii contra objiciunt, ita confutatur ut cuivis pio lectori ita satisfiat, ut posthac nihil hujusmodi sophistarum fucos sit curaturus.” “All these things are clearly and solidly handled in these Institutes, and all the objections of adversaries so confuted, as to satisfy every pious reader that henceforth he need give himself no trouble with the glosses of such sophists.”

This Edition, like that of 1539, is in folio, but as it is printed on a larger sheet, and contains a greater number of pages, the quantity of matter is increased apparently about a third. The number of chapters is twenty-one, two of them being new, viz., the fourth, which is entitled, “De votis ubi de Monachatu agitur,” and the tenth, entitled, “De Traditionibus Humanis,” while the original chapter, “De Fide ubi et Symbolum quod Apostolicum vocant explicatur,” branches out into four chapters, and occupies nearly a third of the whole volume. As yet, however, the arrangement was far from complete. The places assigned to the new chapters do not seem to be very appropriately chosen, while it is often difficult to explain on what principle the various topics, occasionally introduced into the same chapter, have been associated together. This was evidently the great defect still remaining in the work, and to the removal of it, accord-

ingly, Calvin's last revisal appears to have been more especially directed.

Between the edition of 1545 and that revisal, several editions appear to have been published, but the accounts given of them show that the alterations introduced were of comparatively trivial importance. Gerdesius mentions two editions, one of 1550 and another of 1553; but the only account he gives of them is, that they contained twenty-one chapters. In this respect resembling the edition of 1545, they are probably mere reprints of it. The Translator is indebted to his friend, the Rev. James Cumming of the Edinburgh Academy, for the loan of an edition in very small 8vo, beautifully printed in italic character, and containing, exclusive of copious indices, 1031 pages. Of these, however, only 976 belong to the text of the Institutes, the rest being occupied with Calvin's "*Catechismus Ecclesiæ Genevensis*," which is appended with a continuous pagination. An unfortunate mutilation at the commencement of the volume makes it impossible accurately to assign its date, but as the Catechism in its improved form was originally published in 1545, and is here evidently reprinted, it may safely be assumed that this edition is not earlier than 1550. Like the edition of 1545, it contains twenty-one chapters, and the text appears to be a mere transcript of that edition. The indices, however, are much more complete, and the sections of each chapter are numbered. In this respect the edition in question is a decided improvement on those to which we have already adverted, and furnishes a facility of reference which without it never could have been obtained.

We come now to the last revisal of all, as given in the edition printed at Geneva under Calvin's own eye by Robert Stephen, in 1559. Calvin was still only fifty years of age,

and all the powers of his mind were in full vigour ; but he had already done the work of many ordinary lives, and his body, which had never been robust, had begun to give signs of premature decay. He appears to have been conscious that his work on earth was drawing to a close, and there is something deeply affecting in the description which he gives of the manner in which he struggled with the ravages of disease, and laboured to perfect his immortal work, justly regarding it as the most valuable legacy which he could leave to the Church : “ Quo magis urgebat morbus eo minus mihi peperci, donec librum superstitem relinquerem.”

This last revisal seems to have been the most important of all, and, accordingly, it is so stated on the title-page, which is in the following terms : “ *Institutio Christianæ Religionis, in libros quatuor nunc primum digesta, certisque distincta capitibus, ad aptissimum methodum ; aucta etiam tam magna accessione ut propemodum opus novum haberi possit.*” The improvements, as here described, are not overrated, and it is easy to enter into Calvin’s feelings when, after modestly declaring, “ *Etsi autem laboris tunc impensi me non pœnitebat : nunquam tamen mihi satisfeci, donec in hunc ordinem qui nunc proponitur digestum fuit,*” he exclaims, “ *Nunc me dedisse confido quod vestro omnium judicio probetur.*” The arrangement is, indeed, admirable, possessing the two essential qualities of being at once simple and comprehensive—so simple that it exists substantially in the Apostles’ Creed, and makes us wonder how it should have so long been overlooked ; and so comprehensive, that while no part of the theological system is omitted, every thing seems to fall naturally into its appropriate place. Even those who have most virulently assailed the theology of the Institutes, have not been able to withhold their admiration of its final arrangement. Hence, Schultingius, a canon of Cologne, who, towards the end of



the sixteenth century, wrote a work under the title of *Bibliotheca Catholica Orthodoxa contra summam Theologiæ Calvinianæ in Institutionibus Joh. Calvin et locis communibus Petri Martyris breviter comprehensæ*, says, in a passage quoted by Gerdesius : *Methodus profecto adeo insignis est et artificiosa, ut cum Institutionibus Justiniani conferri possit, quo libro juris-consulti merito sentiunt, nihil scriptum esse magis methodice.*

It was impossible that such a work as the Institutes of the Christian Religion could long be confined to the language in which it was originally written. To the class for whom it was at first specially designed, it must have been a dead letter so long as it existed only in Latin : and hence it has been argued, either that the original must have been in French, or that there must have been two originals, French being one of them. It must be admitted that the antecedent probability of this is very strong, so strong that it must have been held to be fact, had it not been met by an explicit denial on the part of Calvin himself. This denial is found in an interesting notice prefixed to an edition of the French translation, in the Advocates' Library, printed at Geneva in 1545, and bearing on the title-page (see Fac-simile, No VI. Appendix) that the work was "Composée en Latin par Iehan Caluin, et translatée en Francoys par luymesme." The words contained in the notice, or, as it is called, "Argument du Present Livre," are as follows : "Et premierement l'ay mis en Latin, à ce qu'il peust servir à toutes gens d'estude, de quelque nation qu'il fussent : puis apres, desirant de communiquer ce qui en pouoit venir de fruct a nôtre nation Francoyse, l'ay aussi translaté en notre langue."

This must settle the question in favour of a Latin original ; but some doubt still remains as to the period when the first French translation appeared. It is impossible to believe that a

work suggested by the religious wants of the French, and specially designed to supply them, could have remained for years in a language which not one in a thousand of them could read. Still there is no authentic account of a translation by Calvin himself, of any earlier date than 1543. Does not this suggest the idea that there may have been a previous translation by some other person, and that the “*translatée par luymesme*,” on the title-page of the edition of 1545, was intended to distinguish Calvin’s own translation from any other that might have preceded it? Had the Institutes been accessible only to Latin scholars, and not been in general use among those who had embraced the Reformed Doctrine in France, it would scarcely have been deemed entitled to the notice taken of it in the following curious document, which bears date 1543. It is given entire, as contained in the *Ecclesia Reformata* of Gerdesius :—

“ *Arrest de la Cour de Parlement contre les livres de Calvin, Melancthon, et quelques Œuvres d’Erasme et autres, du 14 Fevrier 1543.*

“ Veu par la Cour la Requête à elle présentée par l’Inquisiteur de la Foi, par laquelle et pour les causes contenues en icelle, il requeroit, que suivant l’Arrêt donné par la dite Cour, intervenu sur l’entherinement des lettres de remission obtenues par Estienne Dolet, les livres intitulés, les Gestes du Roy, Epigrammes de Dolet, Caton, Chrispian, l’Exhortation à la lecture de la Sainte l’Ecriture, la Fontaine de Vie, les Cinquante-deux Dimanches Composés par Fabre Stapulense, les Heures de se confesser d’Erasme, le Sommaire du Vieil et Nouveau Testament imprimé par le dit Dolet en Francois les Œuvres de Melancton, une Bible de Geneve, Calvinus, intitulé, Institution de la Religion Chretienne par Calvin, être brulés, mis et convertis ensemble en cendres, comme contenant damnable et pernicieuse et heretique Doctrine : le tout

à l'édification du peuple et à l'augmentation de la Foi Chrétienne et catholique, et aussi défenses être faites à son de trompe et cri public, a tous Libraires et Imprimeurs, d'imprimer ou faire imprimer et exposer en vente tels et semblables livres, et à toutes personnes de quelque état et qualité ou condition qu'elles soient, d'en avoir ou garder en leur possession, ainsi leur être commandé et enjoint incontinent les mettre en justice, sur peine d'être punis comme heretiques. Et oui sur ce le Procureur General du Roy, lequel auroit requis ce que dessus. Et tout considéré :

“ La Cour a ordonné et ordonne les Livres ci-dessus intitulés et dénommés, être brulés au Parvis de l'Eglise de Notre-Dame, au son de la grosse cloche de l'Eglise, et inhibitions et defenses être faites à son de trompe et cri public de cette ville de Paris et autres de ce ressort, a tous Libraires et Imprimeurs, d'imprimer ou faire imprimer et expose en ventes tels et semblables Livres, et à toutes personnes de tel état ou condition qu'elles puissent être, d'en avoir ou garder en leur possession, ains leur commande et enjoint icelle Cour les apporter et mettre en justice, sur peine d'être punis comme heretiques et fauteurs d'iceux, et autre peines, à la discretion de la dite Cour. Fait en Parlement, le 14 jour de Fevrier, l'an 1543.

“MATOU.”

This decree, ordaining that the Institutes, under the odd name of “Calvinus, intitulé, Institution de la Religione Chretienne,” should, in company with other works, be “brulés, mis et convertis ensemble en cendres, comme contenant damnable et pernicieuse et heretique Doctrine : le tout à l'édification du peuple et à l'augmentation de la Foi Chrétienne et catholique,” appears not to be the first which the parliament issued on the subject. It is dated 1543 ; but Beza, in his *Histoire Ecclesiastique*, in the account of the transactions of 1542, says, “Ceste mesme année le Parlement du Paris fait

tres estroites defenses de vendre les livres censurés par la Sorbonne, et nommément l'Institution Chrétienne de Jean Calvin." It would therefore seem that a French Translation of the Institutes was in circulation of an earlier date than any existing edition of the translation made by Calvin.

Gesner, in his *Bibliotheca*, f. 395, mentions, among the works which Calvin had written in French, "*Institutio Religionis in Gallicam Linguam, ab ipso traducta ex Latina.*" He does not mention any date, and hence, as his *Bibliotheca* is dated September 1545, it is not impossible that the translation to which he refers is that which we have already mentioned as having been printed at Geneva in the same year, the printing having been finished in February, of course six months before the *Bibliotheca*.

As the edition of 1545 is one of the earliest extant, it may be proper to extract from it a specimen of Calvin's French style. The following is the concluding passage of the celebrated preface:—

"Vous auez, Sire, la venimeuse iniquite de noz calomnieateurs exposee par assez de parolles : a fin que vous n'encliniez pas trop l'aureille, pour adiouster foy a leurs rapportz. Et mesme ie doute que ie n'aye este trop long : veu que ceste preface a quasi la grandeur d'une defense entiere. Combien que par icelle ie n'aye pretendu composer vne defense, mais seulement adoucir vostre cueur, pour donner audience a nostre cause. Lequel vostre cueur, combien qu'il soit a present detourne et aliene de nous, l'adiouste mesme enflambe : toutesfois i'espere que nous pourrons regagner sa grace, sil vous plaist, vne fois, hors d'indignation et courroux, lire ceste nostre confession, laquelle nous voulons estre pour defense envers vostre Maieste. Mais si au contraire, les detractions des maluueillans empechent tellement voz au-



reilles, que les accusez n'ayent aucun lieu de se defendre : d'autre part, si ces impetueuses furies, sans que vous y mettiez ordre, exercent tousiours cruaute par prison, fouetz, gehennes, coupeures, bruleures : nous certes, comme brebis deuouees a la boucherie, serons iettez en toute extremite. Tellement neantmoins qu'en nostre patience nous possederons noz ames et attendrons la main forte du Seigneur : laquelle, sans doute, se monstrera en saison, et apparoistra armee, tant pour deliurer, les pources de leur affliction, que pour punir les contempteurs.

“ Le Seigneur Roy des Roys, vueille establir vostre Throne en iustice et vostre Siege en equite.

“ De Basle, le vingt troisieme d'Aoust, mil cinq cens trente cinq.”

After the publication of the standard Latin edition of 1559, Calvin undertook a similar revisal of the French translation, introducing into it all the new improvements and additions, and published it at Geneva in 1562. This translation is in general very literal ; but as Calvin in preparing it combined the double character of Author and Translator, he has occasionally availed himself of his privilege in this respect, and sunk the Translator in the Author, not restricting the translation to the precise idea conveyed by the Latin, but explaining or modifying it, and at times, though very rarely, introducing a new sentence. In this way, the French edition of 1562 partakes somewhat of the character of an original work, and becomes indispensable in translating the Institutes into any other language.

As there is scarcely a language of Europe into which the Institutes have not been translated, it would have been strange if, amid this general diffusion, our own land had been overlooked. In point of date, the French translation natu-

rally takes the lead. The next place seems to belong to the Italian, which was printed at Geneva in 1557. The third place belongs to the English translation, which appeared for the first time in 1561.—(See Fac-simile, No. IX. Appendix.) The Translator's name is not mentioned on the title-page, but in a notice by "The Printers to the Reders," on the reverse of the title-page, they state, that though one Master Dawes "had translated it, and deliuered it into our handes more than a tweluemoneth past," yet "we haue ben by diuerse necessarie causes con-strayned with our earnest entreatance to procure an other frende of oures to translate it whole agayn. This translation, we trust, you shal well allow. For it hath not only ben faythfully done by the translator himself, but also hath ben wholly perused by such men, whoes iugement and credit al the godly learned in Englande well knowe and esteme." The volume, which is in folio, is, with the exception of Calvin's Epistle to the Reader, which is in Italic character, printed in black letter. The last page is signed with the Translator's initials, T. N., *i. e.*, Thomas Norton, who threw off his incognito in the subsequent editions, and gave his name in full on the title-page. His Preface, which explains the mode in which he proceeded in executing the translation, and contains other matters of considerable interest, will be found in the Appendix.

Norton, upon the whole, executed his task with great fidelity. Indeed, his most serious fault is, that he has been over-scrupulous. Having considered how the author of the Institutes "had, of long time, purposely laboured to write the same most exactly, and to packe great plentie of matter in small roome of wordes," he felt "encumbred with great doubtfulnessse for the whole order and frame" of his translation. Two modes of translation presented

themselves : either, as he expresses it, to “ follow the wordes,” or “ leave the course of wordes, and graunt myselve libertye after the naturall manner, to say that in English which I conceaved to be his meaning in Latine.” His determination was, “ to follow the wordes so neere as the phrase of the English tongue would suffer ;” and accordingly he states it to be one of the qualities of his translation, “ that if the English booke were printed in such paper and letter as the Latine is, it sholde not exceede the Latine in quantitie.” He even recommends the use of the translation as a means of learning Latin, on the principle of what is now known by the name of the Hamiltonian System. In pursuing this whimsical idea, Norton added greatly to the difficulty of his translation, and, at the same time, diminished its value. Instead of the pure English of the period at which he wrote, the utmost he could give was English words in a Latin idiom. In this way the translation, which must often have seemed rugged and harsh to his contemporaries, has become in great measure unfit for modern use.

In these circumstances, it was deemed absolutely necessary to abandon the idea of reprinting it ; and accordingly a new translation has been prepared, in which it is hoped that, without any overstraining after such scrupulosity as Norton aimed at, the true meaning of the Author has been given in plain English, and so made accessible to every class of readers.

There seems no ground for the allegation which has been made, that the text of the Institutes was tampered with after the Author's decease. To guard against any such adulteration, the Translator availed himself of a copy of the edition of 1559 ; but as the most complete edition, in point of form, is that which is contained in the ninth volume of Calvin's

Works, published at Amsterdam in 1671, it has been regarded as the standard; and, accordingly, all the headings of books, chapters, and sections, contained in that edition, have been introduced into the present translation, with this difference, that the headings of the sections, instead of being placed on the margin, where they would have overloaded and given an unsightly form to the volumes, have been collected and placed in immediate succession under each chapter, previous to the commencement of the text. In this way they form a kind of abridgment of the whole work,—an abridgment not only convenient for the purpose of occasional consultation, but also of great value to those who, after studying the Institutes as part of their professional course, are desirous, without burdening their memory with all the details, to treasure up their substance.

One of the most recent editions of the Institutes is that of Tholuck, who has added a few occasional notes, consisting chiefly of quotations from the Classics or the Fathers. As it was desired to make the present translation as complete as possible, the notes, though not in themselves of very great importance, have been introduced into it. Constant use has also been made of the last French translation, revised by Calvin himself, and printed at Geneva in 1562. The Latin text is in general perfectly clear, and where there is a competent knowledge of the language, there is little danger of mistaking the meaning. Ambiguities, however, do occur, and it was considered that there could not be a more legitimate and effectual mode of explaining them than to make the Author his own expositor, and hold the meaning to be what he himself has made it in his vernacular tongue. It has already been observed, that Calvin, in his translation, occasionally avails himself of his privilege as Author. Due attention has been paid to the changes thus made on the



original, any difference of meaning or of expression which seemed deserving of notice being given in foot notes. In this respect it is hoped that the present Translation possesses a very decided advantage.

The Translator had at one time proposed to attempt an enumeration of the principal editions of the Institutes, both in the original and in the various languages into which they have been translated. Feeling conscious that he must have executed such a task very imperfectly, he was anxious to be relieved of it, and is now happy in being able to refer the reader to the very complete Catalogue Raisonnée, for which the Calvin Translation Society are indebted to Robert Pitcairn, Esq., F.S.A.S., their Acting and Editorial Secretary.

The portrait of Calvin which enriches the present volume is from an original preserved in the Public Library of Geneva. The Rev. Thomas M'Crie having had occasion to proceed to Geneva, the Calvin Translation Society gladly embraced the opportunity of procuring an authentic copy of this interesting portrait, an engraving of which is thus for the first time given to the world.

The Translator, in concluding this Notice, ought perhaps to apologise both for the length to which it has extended, and the kind of materials of which it is composed. Some readers may think that the space devoted to bibliographical disquisition might have been better occupied with an analysis of the Work itself, or a critical examination of the peculiar views embodied in it. It may, however, be observed, that a very complete analysis already exists in the summary of sections prefixed to each separate chapter; and that the critical examination, even if the Translator had been quali-

fied to undertake it, must necessarily have led to the discussion of questions which the CALVIN TRANSLATION SOCIETY composed as it is of individuals agreeing in the great essentials of Protestantism, but differing on points of minor moment, have wisely determined to avoid. Instead of calling attention to the peculiarities of what is called the Calvinistic System, the Translator would simply remark, that though the Institutes undoubtedly contain a full statement and able defence of these peculiarities, the portion so occupied is of comparatively limited extent, and that the great body of the Work is devoted to the exposition of a general system of Theology,—a system so complete in all its parts, as fully to justify the eulogy of Sturmius :—“Se optime institutum existimet, qui, quæ in eo volumine traduntur, est assecutus.”

H. B.

EDINBURGH, *February* 24, 1845.

## APPENDIX TO INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

### CATALOGUE RAISONNÉE OF THE EARLIER EDITIONS OF CALVIN'S INSTITUTES OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.<sup>1</sup>

PRÆTER APOSTOLICAS POST CHRISTI TEMPORA CHARTAS,  
HUIC PEFERERE LIBRO SECULA NULLA PAREM.

It has been considered that a List of the various early Editions through which the *magnum opus* of Calvin, his INSTITUTES OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION, passed under his own eye, or which at least were published *during his lifetime*, would be likely to prove interesting and important to the MEMBERS of the CALVIN TRANSLATION SOCIETY. In the belief that it would be an acceptable contribution, however small, towards the elucidation of the history and progress of the Reformation, such a List has accordingly been prepared, after considerable research, to accompany the present new and original English version.

With a view to the preparation of a proper Translation, the Secretary has, from time to time, formed a considerable collection of early Editions and Translations of the Institutes; and through the kindness and liberality of private friends and Members of the Calvin Society, as well as from the Libraries of the Faculty of Advocates and Writers to her Majesty's Signet, Edinburgh, he has likewise obtained in loan many rare and valuable copies for the use of the Editor, during the progress of this work through the press. From

<sup>1</sup> Prepared by Robert Pitcairn, F.S.A.Sc., the Acting and Editorial Secretary to The Calvin Translation Society.

these sources, and by reference to bibliographical works, an opportunity has now been afforded of presenting to the reader a brief Catalogue Raisonné of the most prominent of these early Editions. Owing to the rarity of many of these books, it has also been deemed proper to indicate the public or private collections in which copies of each separate edition are at present known to exist.

*Fac-similes* of the title-pages of the most remarkable of these Editions have been made, with considerable care and expense, to accompany this volume; and as some of the dedications and prefaces of the earlier Italian, Spanish, and English Translations, afford extremely curious and important matter connected with the spread of the principles of the Reformation, especially in reference to France, Italy, and Spain, it has been thought expedient to incorporate them, without abridgment, in this Appendix.

The thanks of the Calvin Society are justly due to DAVID LAING, Esq., the Rev. JOHN BROWN, D.D., and the Rev. CHARLES WATSON, D.D., all of Edinburgh, for the liberal use they have freely given of several valuable editions of the Institutes belonging to them, for the purpose of collating the text, while the present Translation was preparing for the press.

It is proper to explain, that in framing this Catalogue, it has, of course, been deemed necessary to adhere *literally* to the orthography and punctuation, &c. observed in the title-pages; and that where the original was not before the compiler, the description was taken from the best bibliographical sources. In every such case the authority has been quoted.

I. Christianae Religionis Institutio, totam ferè pietatis summā, & quicquid est in doctrina salutis cognitu necessarium, complectens: omnibus pietatis studiosis lectu dignissimum opus, ac recens editum. Praefatio ad Christianissimum Regem Franciae, qua his ei liber pro confessione fidei offertur. *Joanne Calvino* Nouiodunensi autore. Basileae M.D.XXXVI. —Colophon: Basileae per *Thomam Platterū & Balthasarem Lasium*, mense Martio, anno 1536. 8vo, pp. 514.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Of this extremely rare edition, (which has not the table, but merely a brief note, "Capita Argumentorum," on the back of the title,) a perfect



II. Institutio Christianae Religionis nunc verè demum suo titulo respondens. Autore Joanne Caluino, Nouiodunensi. Cum Indice locupletissimo. Habac. I. Quousque Domine? Argentorati per Vuendelinum Rihelium. Mense Augusto Anno M.D.XXXIX.—Colophon: Argentorati per *Vuendelinum Rihelium* mense Augusto, anno MDXXXIX. Folio, pp. 434.<sup>1</sup>

III. Institutio Christianae Religionis nunc verè demum suo titulo respondens. Autore *Alcuino*. Cum Indicae locupletissimo. Habac. I. Quousq, Domine? Argentorati per *Vuendelinum Rihelium*. Mense Augusto anno M.D.XXXIX.—Colophon: Argentorati per Vuendelinum Rihelium. Mense Augusto. Anno MDXXXIX. Folio, pp. 434.<sup>2</sup>

IV. Institutio Christianae Religionis nunc uerè demum suo titulo respondens. Authore *Joanne Calvino*.—*Joannes Sturmius*. Joannes Calvinus homo acutissimo iudicio summaq, doctrina & egregia memoria praeditus est: & scriptor est uarius, copiosus, purus: cuius rei testimoniū est Institutio Christianae religionis quam primo inchoatam, deinde locu-

copy is in the collection of David Laing, Esq., Edinburgh, to whom the Calvin Society is indebted for the free use of it, for collating with the various texts, in preparing the present translation. A *fac-simile* of the title-page is given by the kind permission of Mr Laing, being No. I. Only six or seven copies of this valuable edition can now be traced.

<sup>1</sup> This very rare edition has neither the Preface nor Table. The Editor has not been able to procure inspection of a copy of this edition; but it is presumed to be precisely the same with the copy which immediately follows it in this list, (No. III.)

<sup>2</sup> It is extremely probable that this edition is identical with the preceding; and that the publishers had thought proper to substitute *ALCUINUS* for *CALVINUS*, (being a transposition of the first three letters of his name,) in the title-page of copies intended for circulation in countries where the principles of the Reformation were unpopular, and where Calvin's name would have been fatal to the sale of the work. For a *fac-simile* of the title-page of this edition, which is of excessive rarity, see Appendix, No. II. A copy is in the collection of the Rev. Dr Watson, Royal Terrace, Edinburgh, who liberally afforded access to it in preparing this translation.

On the last leaf occur the following curious lines in French and Latin, written in the neat hand of the period by its first owner:—

“Ce present liure, sans fiction,	“Si nomen meum quaeris,
Appartient a vn bon compagnon :	PETRUS, plenus amoris :
Si vous voulez sçauoir son nom,	Si de meo cognomine,
C'est ROUSPEAU, bon garçon.”	RUSPELTUS dicitur esse.”

And at the foot of the title-page, which is covered over with scribbling, “MERLATUS, Pastor, hunc librum habuit ex paterna bibliotheca anno 1658.”

pletatam hoc uero anno absolutam edidit: neque scio an quicquam huius generis extet, perfectius ad docendam religionem: ad corrigendas mores & tollendos errores: & se optime institutum existimet, qui, quae in eo uolumine traduntur, est assecutus. Habacuc. I. Quousq; Domine? Argentorati per Vuendelinum Rihelium. Mense Martio. Anno M.D.XLIII.—Colophon: Argentorati per *Vuendelinum Rihelium*. Mense Martio. Anno M.D.XLIII. Folio, pp. 505.<sup>1</sup>

V. Institutio Christianae Religionis, &c. &c.<sup>2</sup> *Additus est Index locupletissimus.* Habacuc. 1. Quousq; Domine? Argentorati per *Vuendelinum Rihelium*. Mense Martio. Anno M.D.XLV.—Colophon: Argentorati per *Vuendelinum Rihelium* Mense Martio. Anno M.D.XLV. Folio, pp. 505.<sup>3</sup>

VI. Institutio Christianae Religionis, in libros quatuor nunc primum digesta certisque distincta capitibus, ad aptissimam methodum: aucta etiam tam magna accessione ut propemodum opus nouum haberi possit. JOANNE CALVINO AVTHORE. Oliua Roberti Stephani. Genevae. M.D.LIX.—Colophon: Excudebat Robertus Stephanus Geneuae, anno M.D.LIX, XVII. Cal. Septembr. Folio, pp. 564.<sup>4</sup>

VII. Institutio Christianæ religionis in libros quatuor nunc primum digesta, certisque distincta capitibus ad aptissimam methodum: aucta etiam tam magna accessione ut propemodum opus nouum haberi possit: *Iohanne Caluino authore. Introite per angustam portam, quoniam lata est porta, & spatiosa via quæ abducit in exitium. Matth. 7. 6. 13. Excudebat Anto-*

<sup>1</sup> *Clement*, in his *Bibliothèque Curieuse Historique et Critique*, ou *Catalogue Raisonné de Livres difficiles à trouver*, tom. vi. 78, terms this edition, "*fort-rare*."

<sup>2</sup> Verbatim the same as the title-page of the above edition 1543.

<sup>3</sup> A *fac-simile* of the title-page of this edition will be found at the end of the Preface. A copy, in beautiful preservation, is in the collection of the Rev. John Brown, D.D., Edinburgh. It has Calvin's Preface with Table, "Summa eorum quæ in hoc opere continentur," pp. 2; with "Index insignium locorum qui hoc opere tractantur," pp. 26, double columns, in alphabetical order.

<sup>4</sup> A copy of this edition is in the possession of Robert Pitcairn, F.S.A.Sc., Edinburgh. It is styled by *Clement*, vi. 81, "Edition rare." It has neither the preliminary pieces nor the table.

*nus Rebulius*. 1561.—Colophon : Ex Officina *Antonii Rebulii*, anno post Christum natum, M.D.LXI. Octavo pp. 980.<sup>1</sup>

VIII. Institutio Christianæ Religionis, Joanne Caluino auctore. Additi sunt nuper duo Indices, hac postrema editione longè quam antea castigatiores, ab Augustino Marlorato pridem collecti : quorum prior res præcipuas, posterior expositos Sacræ Scripturæ locos continet. Item accesserunt annotatiunculæ peritiles, de quibus agetur sequenti pagella. Londini, Excudebat Thomas Vautrollier. 1576. Octavo, pp. 742.<sup>2</sup>

IX. Institutionis Christianæ Religionis a Joanne Caluino conscriptæ. Per Guil. Launeum, in Eccl. Gallicana ministrum. Londini Excudebat Tho. Vautrollier 1584. Octavo.<sup>3</sup>

X. Institutione della Religion Christiana di Messer Giovanni Calvino. *In volgare Italiano tradotta per GIULIO CESARE P.*<sup>4</sup> In Geneva. Appresso Iacopo Burgese, Antonio Dauodeo & Francesco Iacchi, compagni. *M.D.LVII.*<sup>5</sup> Octavo pp. 754. Cum Dedicatione, “All’ illustrissimo et piissimo Signore, il Signor Galleazzo Caracciolo, Marchese di Vico,” pp. 3; Præfatio ad Franciscum I. Regem Franciæ pp. 11; et 2 Tab. pp. 16.

XI. Institution de la Religion Christiana ; compuesta en

<sup>1</sup> This edition appears to be of rather rare occurrence. A *fac-simile* of the title-page is given in this Appendix, having a wood-cut representing the strait and wide gates. A copy is in the possession of Robert Pitcairn, F.S.A.Scot., Edinburgh. It has the preliminary pieces and Calvin’s table, and was probably printed at Geneva.

<sup>2</sup> Besides other prefatory matter, the tables, &c.

<sup>3</sup> Vautrollier published another edition in 1584. See *Herbert’s Ames*, ii. 1073. It is probable that other Latin editions of the Institutes were published in England prior to 1600; but there is no notice of them preserved in the last edition of Ames’ *Typ. Antiq.* by Herbert.

<sup>4</sup> Paschali. See Bayle, *Dict.* iii. He embraced the reformed doctrines, and fled to Geneva, where he translated the Institutes when in his thirtieth year. Paschali was also a good poet, and translated the Book of Psalms into Italian verse, which he published at Geneva in 1592, in the sixty-fifth year of his age.

<sup>5</sup> There is no colophon to this extremely scarce edition. It was rigidly suppressed by the Inquisition. A copy is in the collection of Robert Pitcairn, F.S.A.Sc., Edinburgh. A *fac-simile* of the original title-page and a reprint of the dedication are given in this Appendix.



quatre Livros, y dividida en Capítulos. Por Juan Caluino. Y ahora nuevamente traduzida en Romance Castellano, por *Cypriano de Valera*. En casa de Ricardo del Campo. 1597. Quarto pp. 1032.<sup>1</sup>

XII. Institvtion de la Religion Chrestienne: Composee en Latin par Iehan Caluin, & translatée en Francoys par luy-mesme: en laquelle est comprise vne somme de toute la Chrestienté. Auec la Preface adressée au Roy: par laquelle ce present Liure luy est offert pour confession de Foy.—Non veni pacem mittere sed gladium. Matth. X. Veni ignem mittere. Luc. XII. Iusques à quand, Seigneur? A Geneve, *Par Iehan Girard*. 1545.—Colophon: Acheve d'imprimer le dixiesme de Fevrier, Mil cinq cens quarante cinq. Octavo, pp. 1027.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A copy of this translation, termed by *Clement* "edition fort-rare," is preserved in the Advocates' Library. A *fac-simile* of the title-page, and the very interesting Preface, follow in this Appendix. The work was rigorously suppressed by the Inquisition. The introductory pieces and tables do not accompany this translation.

<sup>2</sup> A *fac-simile* of the title-page of this beautiful edition will be found in this Appendix. The original is in the Library of the Faculty of Advocates, Edinburgh. This edition contains an explanatory Address to the Reader by Calvin, containing his reasons for translating his work into his own vernacular French. A translation of this interesting Address, entitled "Argument dv present Liure," will be found at p. 29 of the present volume. An alphabetical Index, pp. 22, closes the book. *Clement*, vi. 91, mentions that he had seen no French edition prior to 1562.

There seems to be no doubt, from a quotation preserved by *Clement*, that "*Jean Gerard*" published an edition in French in 1553, of which, however, no trace can at present be found. "Nondum expleto postea anno, initio scilicet anni 1553, cum eidem (Laurentio) Normandio recuderet Gerardus *Calvini* Gallicam Institutionem, rogatus Indicem confeci." Nicolas Colladon is the person who was employed to frame the index above alluded to.—*Clement*, vi. 77. It is probable that that was the Second French edition.

Much obscurity hangs over the subject of THE FIRST FRENCH EDITION of the Institutes, as translated by Calvin. It has been stated by *Bayle*, on the authority of *Maimbourg*, that the work itself originally appeared in French; and *Sponde* asserts that it was published at Bâle, Aug. 1, 1535, and had on the title-page a flaming sword, with the motto, *Non veni mittere pacem sed gladium*. *Bayle* does not attempt to decide the question; but quotes *Gessner*, (Biblioth. fol. 396,) as his authority for stating that it was before 1544. There is an evident mistake in this matter, as the work of *Gessner* was not published till September 1545! *M. Joly*, however, in his Critical Remarks on *Bayle*, (Paris, 1752, i. 255,) expressly announces, "La premiere edition est Latin, comme il paroît par l'editio Françoise de 1541, in 8vo, d'environ, 800 pp., faite à Bâle sous ce titre :



XIII. Institvtion de la Religion Chrestienne. Mise en Quatre Liures et distingvee par Chapitres en ordre et methode bien propre. Par Iean Calvin. *Non veni vt mitterem pacem, sed gladium.* Matth. X. A Geneve, De l'Imprimerie de Iaques Bourgeois. M.D.LXII. Quarto, pp. 955.<sup>1</sup>

XIV. Institution de la Religion Chrestienne, nouvellement mis en Quatres Livres : & destinguée par Chapitres en ordre & methode bien propre : Augmentée aussi de tel accroissement, qu'on la peut presque estimer un Livre nouveau. Nous avons aussi adiousté deux Indices tres amples, tant des matières contenues en ce liure que des passages de la Bible qui y sont alleguez, selon l'ordre du vieil & nouveau Testament : dont on cognoistra l'utilité par l'Epistre mise

INSTITUTION CHRETIENNE . . . . composee en Latin et translatee en François par lui meme."

*Clement* (vi. 90) also gives the important information, that the *second* French edition is quoted in "Le Catalogue des Livres Imprimé du Roi de France, Theologie, iii. 78, no. 715;" and that it is in quarto, without any date or printer's mark. The number immediately following the same Collection is a French edition printed in octavo, also wanting date.

There can be no doubt that there were many editions, in French, previously and subsequently to the death of Calvin; but they seem to be of much rarity in France: and it is not improbable that, during the persecutions of the Protestants, they were diligently sought after and destroyed.

<sup>1</sup> In the possession of the Editor of this work. It has this motto subjoined to the Address:—"Je me confesse estre du rang de ceux qui escrivent en profitant, & profitent en escriuant."—*S. Augustin en l'Epistre viii.* This is followed by the following quaint lines translated from Calvin's Latin:—

*Quatrain traduit d'un Distique Latin de L'auteur.*

Ceux desquels ie voulois l'innocence defendre  
En vn simple liure, m'ont si bien seu poursuiure  
Par leur zele feruent, et saintet desir d'apprendre,  
Qu'ils ont tire de moy a la fin ce grand liure.

Calvin's own *Distich* was as follows:—

Quos animus fuerat tenui excusare libello,  
Discendi studio magnum fecere volumen.

Subjoined is "Table ou Brief Sommaire des Principales matieres contenues en ceste Institution de la Religion Chrestienne, dressé selon l'ordre de l'Alphabet," (pp. 42,) in double columns. The volume is closed with the Indices of Matters, compiled by Augustine Marlorat, with an Address by him to the Reader, dated May 1, 1562. These Indices are in treble columns,—(pp. 72.) *Clement* cites this copy as "La plus ancienne edition que j'ai pu acquerir," vi. 91.

Notice is likewise preserved by *Clement*, vi. 91, of an edition, Geneve, Chez Thomas Courteau, 1564, in 8vo; as cited by *Reading*, in *Bibliotheca Cleri Londinensis*, Londini, 1724, in folio, p. x. 8.

devant les dict Indices.—Par *Jean Calvin*. A Lion, par Jean Martin 1565. Octavo pp. 1256.<sup>1</sup>

XV. Institution de la Religion Chrestienne, par *Jean Calvin*. Avec les Indices, l'un des matières principales : l'autre des passages de l'Ecriture exposez en icelle, recueillis par *A. Marlorat*. A Geneve, de l'Imprimerie de François Perrin M.D.LXVI.—Colophon : Achevé d'imprimer l'an M.D.LXVI le XII de Novembre. Folio, pp. 1034.<sup>2</sup>

XVI. Institution de la Religion Chrestienne par *Jean Calvin* nouvellement traduite par *Charles Icard*, Pasteur. A Breme. Chez Hermann Brauer le jeune Imprimeur de la Republique. M.DCC.XIII. Folio. pp. 1108.<sup>3</sup>

XVII. Institution de la Religion Chrétienne par Jean Calvin. *Traduction de Charles Icard, Pasteur, Imprimée à Brême en 1713*. A Genève, Chez Guers, Libraire, rue de la Cité No. 224, et place de la Fusterie. De l'Imprimerie des Successeurs Bonnant. 1818. 3 Tomes, Octavo.<sup>4</sup>

XVIII. Institutio Christianae Religionis. Das ist, Vnderweisung Christlicher Religion, in vier Bücher verfasset, durch

<sup>1</sup> Cited by *Clement* as being in his own collection, vi. 91.

<sup>2</sup> Besides *Marlorat's* two tables, there is added, "La Table des principales matières contenues en cette Institution par *Nicolas Colladon*." Another edition in *quarto* is edited by *Clement* as having been published by François Perrin in the same year, (1566,) which is in Bibl. du Roi de France, *Theologie*, T. iii. p. 78, n. 717.

<sup>3</sup> M. Icard was minister of the French Church at Bremen. He first "retouched" the standard French version, and published the First Book of the Institutes in 1696, in *quarto*; which he dedicated to the Elector of Brandenburg. In this dedication, he deplores the desolation of the Reformed churches in France. The Second Book he published in 1697. It was above fifteen years before he completed his labours, when the folio edition above cited appeared in 1713, which he dedicated to the King of Prussia. In the edition of 1713, both of these dedications are preserved, followed by a translation of that by Calvin to Francis I.; the Life of Calvin by Beza; the panegyric of Calvin, by Alexander Morus; with 100 Aphorisms drawn from the Institutes. Two tables of matters, and passages of Scripture cited, close the work.

<sup>4</sup> There are copious Analytical Tables to each book, but none of the usual preliminary or supplementary matter. A copy of this edition is in the possession of Robert Pitcairn, F.S.A.Scot., Edinburgh.

It has been deemed of importance to preserve notices of these modern French editions, which are little, if at all, known in this country.

Herrn *Johannem Calvinum*. Auss Lateinisher vnd Frantzösischer Sprach, trewlich verteutcht. Sampt der Vniversitet zu Heydelberg Theologen vnd Kirchendienern Vorrede, vnd Register der Hauptpuncten. So wol zur Retorsion ihme Herrn *Calvino* angedichter Calumnien irriger Lehr: Als auch zur Stärkung vnnnd Behauptung rechten beständigen grunds, wahter in H. Göttlicher Schrifft verfafter Religion: Vermittelst deren ein jeder vnpartheyscher Christ bey jetzigen strittigen Puncten, die Warheit ergründen kan. Geruckt zu Hanau, in verlegung *Wolfgang Dietrichs Caesars*, vnd *Wilhelm Anthoni*. Anno M.D.XCVII. Quarto pp. 1155.<sup>1</sup>

XIX. Institutio &c. (*ut supra*) Gerdruckt zu Heydelberg, durch *Johann Lancelott*, In Verlegung *Vincentii Steinmeyers* Anno MDCVIII. Quarto.<sup>2</sup>

XX. Institutie ofte Onderwiisinge in de Christelicke Religie, in vier Boecken begrepen: door *Joannem Calvinum*: Wt de Latijnsche ende Fransoysche Sprake ghetronwelick verduytchet. Met den Sendtbrief des selven *Calvini* au den Coninck van Franckrycke. Daer is oock achter aen ghevoecht een schoone Tafel *Augustini Marlorati*, inhoudende de voornaemste poincten der heylighen Schrifthuere, de welcke noyte te voren daer by en is gheweest. Noch van nieus hier achter aen geyoecht een schoon Stuckken van de Reformatie der Christelicker Kercke in het Pausdom, gemaect in Latyn door den selven Autheur: Ende nu getrouwelick overgeset in onse Nederduytche Sprake, door *Car. Agric.* Leeraer der Ghemeynte tot Rijnsburch. Tot Amsterdam, bÿ *Heynderick Laurensz*, Boeck-vercooper, woonende opt water int Schryftboeck, anno 1617. Folio, 375 folios,<sup>3</sup> (pp. 750.)

<sup>1</sup> This GERMAN translation has not the preliminary pieces nor the tables. It seems to be the first edition.

<sup>2</sup> *Clement* states that he had in his possession copies of each of these editions.

<sup>3</sup> This curious DUTCH translation has a copperplate engraving of Calvin, accompanied by four lines of Dutch poetry. The translator was *Charles Agricola*. *Gerdesius* (*Gerdes*) cites a prior edition by the same printer, in folio, 1614, which he mentions as being in his own possession. There seems to have been a prior edition of this version:—"Sed et in BELGICAM linguam idem hoc opus planè aureum conversum esse, non est quod dubitare quispiam possit, cum ipse Belgicam versionem *Amstelodami*, A. 1614, in folio,



XXI. A Translation of the Institutes into GREEK was published in the year 1618, and is cited by *Jo. Christoph. Dornius*, in his *Bibliotheca Theologica Critica*, Francof. 1721, 8vo, ii. 784. This is also repeated by *Gerdes*, in *Miscellanea Groningana*, ii. pars i. p. 465.

XXII. A Translation of Calvin's Institutes into ARABIC is also mentioned by *Gerdes*, as having been made by J. H. Hottinger; and he refers to *Thesaur. Biblico Philol. Lib. 1, c. 1, p. 61.*<sup>1</sup>

XXIII. A Translation of the Institutes into the HUNGARIAN was published in Quarto, Hanau, 1624.—*Joh. Jac. Lucii*, *Catal. Bibliothecæ Mœno-Francofurtensis*, Quarto, Francof. 1728, Theol. p. 52.

XXIV. The Institvtion of the Christian Religion, vvrytten in Latine, by maister Ihon Caluin, and translated into Englysh according to the authors last edition. *Seen and allowed according to the order appointed in the Quenes maiesties injunctions.* Imprinted at London by *Reinolde Vvolfe & Richarde Harison*, Anno 1561. Cum priuilegio ad imprimendum solum.—Colophon: Imprinted at London in Paules Churchyard by Reynolde VVolfe and Richard Haryson. The yeere of our Lorde. 1561. The 6 day of Maye. Cum priuilegio ad imprimendum solum.—Black-letter, Foolscap Folio, fol. 510 (pp. 1020) with prefaces and brief tables.<sup>2</sup>

XXV. The Institution of the Christian Religion, &c., as above. Reprinted in quarto, by Richard Harison, 1562.

XXVI. The Institution of the Christian Religion, wrytten in Latine by maister Jhon Caluin, and translated into

apud Henricum Laurentii editam possideam, procuratum per Carolinum Agricolam V. D. M. Rhenoburgensem. Cui subjunct legitur supplicatio de necessaria Ecclesiæ Christianæ Reformatione ad Invictiss. Casarem Carolum V. et reliquos Principes in Comitii Spirensibus congregatos, &c., eodem Carolo Agricola interprete."

<sup>1</sup> *Gerdes*, *Miscell. Groning.* ii. pars i. p. 465.

<sup>2</sup> A copy of this edition is in the collection of Robert Pitcairn, F.S.A.Sc., Edinburgh. It is of rather uncommon occurrence.



English according to the author's last edition. By Thomas Norton. Whereunto are newly added sundry Tables to finde the principall matters entreated of in this Booke, containing by order of common places the summe of the whole doctrine taught in the same, and also the declaration of places of Scripture therein expounded. At London Printed by the widowe<sup>1</sup> of Reginalde Wolffe. Anno Domini. 1574.

XXVII. Edm. Bunnie his abridgement of Caluin's Institutions: translated by Edw. May. London. For William Norton. 1580. Octavo.<sup>2</sup>

XXVIII. The Institvtion of Christian Religion, writtine in Latine by M. Iohn Calvine, and translated into English according to the Avthors last edition, by Thomas Norton. *Hereunto are newly added sundry Tables to find the principall matters entreated of in this book, containing by order of comon places the summe of the whole doctrine taught in the same, and also the declaration of places of Scripture therein expounded. (Device of Christ, as the Good Shepherd, with a sheep across his shoulders, surrounded by the motto, Perit et inventa est.)* At London Printed by Henrie Middleton, for William Norton. 1582. Small Quarto, 507 folios, (pp. 1014,) having the various Prefixes and very copious Tables.<sup>3</sup>

XXIX. The Institution of Christian Religion, written in Latine by M. John Calvine, and translated into English according to the Author's last edition, with sundry Tables. By Tho. Norton. Wherunto there are newly added in the margent notes of the matter handled in each section. Quarto, London. Printed by H. Midleton for W. Norton. 1587. Fol. 507 (pp. 1014.)—Besides Prefatory matter, copious Tables, &c.

XXX. Aphorismes of Christian Religion: or a verie

<sup>1</sup> Joan Wolfe. Quarto, black-letter, pica, in double columns and ruled, fol. 472, (pp. 944,) besides the prefixes and copious tables, &c.

<sup>2</sup> This notice is all that seems to have been preserved of this Abridgement of the Institutes by Maunsell, p. 52; *Herbert's Ames*, ii. 879.

<sup>3</sup> In the "Translator to the Reader," he says, "here is now offered you the fourth time printed in Englishe, M. Caluines booke," &c.

compendious abridgement of M. I. Caluins Institutions, set furth in short sentences methodically by M. I. Piscator: And now Engleshed according to the Authors third and last edition by H. Holland. Heb. 13. 9. London, Imprinted by Richard Field and Rob. Dexter. 1596.—Dedicated “to the reverend father, the right worshipfull Mr Dr Goodman, Deane of Westminster” 18 Maij, 1596. There is an Address to the Reader, the author’s Preface, and a Table of the common places. Octavo, pp. 197. On the back of the last is Dexter’s Rebus.

XXXI. The Institution of Christian Religion, written in Latine by *M. John Caluine*, and translated into English according to the Authors last edition, with sundry Tables to finde the principall matters entreated of in this booke, and also the declaration of places of Scripture therein expounded, by Thomas Norton. Whereunto there are newly added in the margent of the booke, notes conteining in breife the substance of the matter handled in each section. Printed at London by Arnold Hatfield, for *Bonham Norton*. 1599.—No Colophon. Quarto, 412 folios, (pp. 824,) with all the preliminary matter and Tables, &c. including *Marlorat’s*.<sup>1</sup>

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It has been thought unnecessary to carry down any enumeration of editions of the original Latin and French texts, or of the translations subsequent in date to those noticed in the preceding Catalogue. They are very numerous, and the purposes of the present list are sufficiently carried out by what has thus been given. After the death of the Author, the editions are known to have multiplied very rapidly in almost every country in Europe, and it would be equally difficult and unavailing to attempt a perfect Chronological List down to the present date.

<sup>1</sup> A copy of this edition is in the possession of R. Pitcairn, F.S.A.Scot.

It thus appears that there were at least *six* separate editions of the Institutes published in English previous to the year 1600—no mean evidence of the great esteem and value in which that Work was held by the people of England at that period.

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\* \* \* THE DIVISION AND ARRANGEMENT OF THE CHAPTERS OF THE  
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THE SECTIONS are introduced at the commencement of each Chapter.



# CHRISTIANA

NAE RELIGIONIS INSTITUTIO, totam ferè pietatis summã & quicquid est in doctrina salutis cognitum necessarium, complectens : omnibus pietatis studiosis lectu dignissimum opus, ac recens editum.

PRAEFATIO AD CHRISTIANISSIMUM REGEM FRANCIAE, *quae hic ei liber pro confessione fidei offertur.*

IOANNE CALVINO  
*Nouiodunensi autore.*

BASILEAE,  

---

M. D. XXXVI.

C A P I T A    A R G V M E N T O -  
rum, quæ in hoc libro tra=  
ctantur.

- 1 *De lege, quod Decalogi explicationem continet.*
- 2 *De fide, ubi & Symbolum ( quod Apostolicum uo-  
cant) explicatur.*
- 3 *De oratione, ubi & Oratio dominica enarratur.*
- 4 *De sacramentis, ubi de baptismo & cæna Domini.*
- 5 *Quo sacramenta non esse quinque, reliqua, quæ pro  
sacramentis hactenus uulgo habita sunt, declara-  
tur: tum qualia sint, ostenditur.*
- 6 *De libertate Christiana, potestate ecclesiastica, &  
politica administratione.*

# INSTITVTIO CHRI STIANAE RELIGIONIS NVNC uerè demum suo titulo respondens

*Autore Alcuino.*

Cum Indice locupletissimo.

*Habac. 1.*

Quousq; Domine?



*Argentorati per Vuendelinum Rihelium.*

Mense Augusto

ANNO M. D. XXXIX.

## Epistola ad Lectorem.



IN PRIMA HVIVS NOSTRI OPERIS AEDITIONE

QVIA eum quem sua benignitate Dominus successum deo minime expectabam, leuiter, maiori ex parte, ut in minimis operibus fieri solet, defunctus eram. Verum cum intellegirem, eo piorum ferè omnium fauore exceptum esse, quem nunquam uoto expetere, nedum sperare, ausus fuisssem: ut mihi plus multo conferre ex animo sentiebam, quàm essem promeritus: ita magnæ ingratitudinis fore putauì, nisi adeo propensis in me studijs, ac meam industriam sponte inuitantibus, respondere saltem pro mea tenuitate conarer. Ne igitur aliam à studio sis gratiam nouo operi postulo, quàm qua me adhuc immerentem iam ante prosecuti sunt. Sic enim eorum benignitate satis obstrictus, ut mihi abunde futurum sit, si debitam gratiam non male rependere uidear. Et facturus id quidem eram aliquanto maturius, nisi totum ferè biennium Dominus me miris modis exercuisset. Verum sat cito est sat bene. Opportune autem prodijisse tunc putabo, ubi sensero fructum aliquem Ecclesiæ Domini attulisse. Porro hoc mihi in isto labore propertum fuit: sacræ Theologiæ candidatos ad diuini uerbi lectionem ita præparare & instruere, ut & facilem ad eam aditum habere, & inoffenso ea gradu pergere queant. siquidem religionis summam omnibus partibus sic mihi complexus esse uideor, & eo quoq; ordine digessisse: ut si quis en recte tenuerit, ei non sit difficile, statuere, & quid potissimum querere in scriptura, & quem in scopum, quidquid in ea continetur, referre debeat. Itaq; , hac ueluti strata uia, si quas posthac scripturæ enarrationes edidero: quia non necesse habeo de dogmatibus longas disputationes institui, & in locos communes euagari, eas compendio semper adstringam. Eaque ratione, magna molestia & fastidio pius lector subleuabitur: modo præsertim operis cognitione, quasi necessario instrumento, præmunitus accept.

sed quia huius instituti specimen præbebunt commentarij in Epistolam ad Romanos: reipsa malo declarare quale sit, quàm uerbis prædicare. Vale amice lector:

& si quem ex meis laboribus fructum percipis, me precibus tuis apud

Dominum adiua. Argenti  
torati Calend. Augusti.

Año. 1539.



# INSTITVTIO CHRI- STIANAE RELIGIONIS NVNC

uerè demum suo titulo respondens.

*Authore Ioanne Caluino.*

Ioannes Sturmius.

IOANNES CALVINVS HOMO ACVTISSIMO IVDICIO summaq; doctrina & egregia memoria præditus est: & scriptor est uarius, copiosus, purus: cuius rei testimoniū est Institutio Christianæ religionis, quam primo inchoatam, deinde locupletatam hoc uero anno absolutam edidit: neque scio an quicquam huius generis extet, perfectius ad docendam religionem: ad corrigendos mores, & tollendos errores: & se optime institutum existimet, qui, quæ in eo uolumine traduntur, est affecutus.

*Additus est Index locupletissimus.*

*Habacuc. 1.*

Quousq; Domine?



*Argentorati per Vuendelinum Rihelium.*

*Menſe Martio.*

ANNO M. D. XLV.

## Epistola ad Lectorem.



**I**N PRIMA HVIVS NOSTRI OPERIS EDITIONE, quia eum quem sua benignitate Dominus successum dedit minime expectabam, leuiter, maiori ex parte, ut in minutis operibus fieri solet, defunctus eram. Verum cū intelligerem, eo piorū ferē omnium fauore exceptum esse, quem nunquā uoto expetere, nedum sperare, ausus fuissē: ut mihi plus multo deferri ex animo sentiebam, quā essē promeritus: ita magnæ ingratitudinis fore putauī, nisi adeo propensis in me studijs, ac meam industriam sponte inuitantibus, respondere saltem pro mea tenuitate conarer. Non igitur aliam à studiosis gratiam nouo operi postulo, quā qua me adhuc immerentem iam ante profecuti sunt. Sic enim eorum benignitate sum obstrictus, ut mihi abunde futurum sit, si debitam gratiam nō male rependere uidear. Et facturus id quidem eram aliquanto maturius, nisi totum fere biennium Dominus me miris modis exercuisset. Verum sat cito, si sat bene. Opportune autem prodijisse tunc putabo, ubi sensero fructum aliquem Ecclesiæ Domini attulisse. Porro hoc mihi in isto labore propositū fuit: sacræ Theologiæ candidatos ad diuini uerbi lectionem ita præparare & instruere, ut & facilem ad eam aditum habere, & inoffenso in ea gradu pergere queant. siquidem religionis summam omnibus partibus sic mihi complexus esse uideor, & eo quoque ordine digessisse: ut si quis eam recte tenuerit, ei non sit difficile, statuere, & quid potissimum quærere in scriptura, & quem in scopum, quidquid in ea continetur, referre debeat. Itaque, hac ueluti strata uia, si quas posthac scripturæ enarrationes edidero: quia nō necesse habeo de dogmatibus longas disputationes instituere, & in locos communes euagari, eas cōpendio semper adstringam. Ea ratione, magna molestia & fastidio pius lector subleuabitur: modo præsentis operis cognitione, quasi necessario instrumento, præmunitus accedat. sed quia huius instituti specimen præbebunt commentarij in epistolam ad Romanos: reip̃sa malo declarare quale sit, quā uerbis prædicare. Vale amice lēctor: & si quem ex meis laboribus fructum percipis, me precibus tuis apud

Dominum adiua. Argentorati

Calend. August. Anno

1 5 3 9

*Augustinus Epistola 7.*

*Ego ex eorum numero me esse profiteor, qui scribunt proficiendo, & scribendo proficiunt.*

# INSTITVTIO CHRIS- tianæ religionis, in libros qua- tuor nunc primùm digesta, certisque distincta capitibus, ad aptissimam methodum: aucta etiam tam maga accessione vt propemodum opus nouum haberi possit.

IOHANNE CALVINO AVTHORE.



Oliua Roberti Stephani.

GENEVAE.

M. D. LIX.





# Institutio Christianæ reli-

GIONIS, IN LIBROS QVATVOR  
nunc primùm digesta, certisque di-  
stincta capitibus, ad aptissimam me-  
thodum: aucta etiam tam magna ac-  
cessione vt propemodum opus no-  
uum haberi possit:

*Iohanne Caluino authore.*



*Excudebat Antonius Rebulius.*

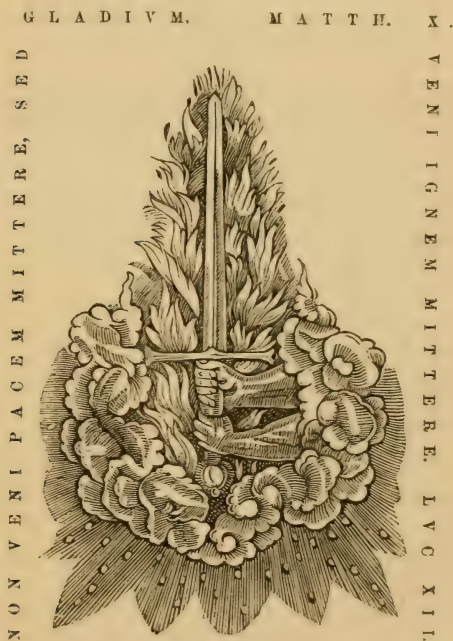
1561.



# INSTITUTION

DE LA RELIGION CHRETIENNE:  
NE: COMPOSEE EN LATIN PAR IEHAN CAL-  
uin, & tranflatée en Francoys par luyefme : en laquelle eft  
comprife vne fomme de toute la Chreftienté.

Auec la Preface adreffée au Roy : par laquelle ce prefent Liure luy  
eft offert pour confeffion de Foy.



*Habac. 1.*

Iusques à quand, Seigneur ?

A GENEVE,  
PAR IEHAN GIRARD.

1 5 4 5.

## IEHAN STVRMIVS.

Iehan Caluin, c'est vn homme d'un iugement qui penetre iufques au bout, & d'une doctrine admirable, & d'une memoire finguliere : & lequel en fes Efcritz, c'est merueilles comment il parle de tout, & abondamment, & purement. Dont, fon Inftitution de la Religion Chreftienne, en eft vn tefmoignage euident. Laquelle vne fois la ayant mife en lumiere, puis apres la enrichit, mais maintenant l'a rendue toute parfaicte. Tellement que ie ne fache nully qui ait onc plus parfaictement efcrit, ny pour demonftrer la vraye Religion, ny pour corriger les meurs, ny pour abatre les abuz. Et quiconques auront atteint iufques aux poinctz des chofes qu'il enseigne en ce Liure la, que telz croient hardiment, qu'ilz font parfaictement eftabliz.



INSTITUTIONE DELLA  
RELIGION CHRISTI-

ANA DI MESSER GIOVANNI  
CALVINO,

*In volgare Italiano tradotta*

*per*

G I V L I O C E S A R E

*P.*

x

x

x

x

IN GENEVA,

Appresso Iacopo Burgefe, Antonia Dauodeo,  
& Francesco Icchi, compagni.

*M. D. L V I I.*



ALL' ILLUSTRISSIMO  
ET PISSIMO SIGNORE  
RE, IL SIGNOR GALEAZZO

*Caracciolo, Marchese  
di Vico.*



RA i molti Christiani componenti Illustriss. Signor Galeazzo, che dalle varie lingue nelle quali varia gente gli legge, nel volgare Italiano tradotti comunemente si disiano da nostri pii & saggi huomini; per verderne il Regno di Giesu Christo nell' Italia nostra auanzare, & quello d' Antichristo gire al basso & a ruina; l'Institutione del-l'Eccellentiss. M. Giouanni Caluino vi s'è dalloro sopra ogni altro disiata, & con ragione. Percioche non è dubbio, che se a tutte quelle parti, le quali in vna scrittura osseruate, sogliono acquistarle nome & grido; si risguarderà per chi volesse nel volume dell'Institution cercarle & ritrouarle; comprenderà costui, che egli n'è da tutti lati abondeuolissimo & ripieno molto. In esso, dico io, si scorgeranno le dette parti tutte esserui cosi abondeuoli, & con tanto ordine, & dottrina, & dignità disposte & contenute; anzi pure con tanti lumi del vero trattate & minutamente discorse; che piu ageuole ne fia lo stimare quanto egli s'auicini alla perfettione d'vna assoluta opera, che il poternele mai partitamente recitare. Perlaqual cosa a Dio non piaccia, che si male accorto io sia, che io mi metta a raccontarle tutte in questa poca carta; & massimamente a voi piüss. Signore, a cui di

cio non fa mestiero; come colui del quale è da tenere, che per la diligente lettione che di quello vi prendete continuo, le habbiate tutte a ciascuna hora scolpite & presenti dauanti a gliocchi della mente. Questo tanto ardirò io d'affermare; che si come vna gran parte della Francia (per non dire d'infinite genti d'altre nationi) riconosce a questo di la sua alluminatione all'intelligenza del rinascente Euangelio, & al conoscimento delle mortifere dottrine del demonia, da Dio, per lo mezzo sopra tutto dell'Institutione Christiana del Caluino: così dee riconoscersi & tenersi da ciascuno, che ella è primo & principale instrumento di Dio fra gli scritti de moderni huommi, per instruire altrui nella vera pietà & Religione; ogni heretica, & empia, & antichristiana bestemmia riuersata & abbattuta. Ma come che tutto cio non sia mica stato occulto a molti de nostri belli ingegni, & alluminati spiriti di diuino lume; altramente inchinatissimi a procacciare la gloria di Dio, & la salute de lor prossimi: si è, che non anchora s'è veduto alcuno, che habbia col tradurla sodisfatto al comune & tanto giusto disiderio de fideli dell'Italia. Qualunque ne sia stata la cagione; di che io non voglio dar sentenza; ha finalmente il Signor Dio, dopo lo spatio di ventidue anni & piu che son trascorsi, da che l'Institutione venne fuori; spinto me hora a conuertirla dal Francese nella nostra volguar lingua: a così faticosa impresa inuitandomi & sollecitandomi non pure con diuersi pensieri dell'auanzamento della sua verità, della destruttione delle bugie del diaulo, & della sodisfattione & giouamento di molti, ch'ei m'ha posti innanzi; ma con non pochi stimoli etiandio d'alquanti amici, che a questo far mi confortauano: a quali così pensieri come stimoli & amicheuoli conforti, io non poteua oppormi con lunga & ostinata resistenza che non mi fosse poi con mio dolor paruto hauermi opposto & a i secreti mouimenti dello Spirito santo, & alle venerande leggi dell'amicitia & Christiana fratellāza. Hauēdola adunque io Italiana fatta, ho altresì voluto, ch'ella vscisse & discorresse per le mani de fideli sotto l'amato & riuerito nome vostro; per così adornarla del titolo di quel Signore, il cui si gran rifiuto di tutte quelle cose che piu care sono & piu pregiate appresso al mondo, per seguire Giesu Christo, si darà sempre



a tanto honore & gloria dell'Euangelica humiltà & bassezza ; quanto egli ha tutti i Signori & Prencipi dell'Italia con tutti i loro popoli di marauiglia ripieni & di stupore, che non è stato poco : & la cui memorabile & Christiana renuntia sarà sempre vn efficace esempio di tanto grande consolatione & ammaestramento a ciascun pio ; di quanto infinito dolore & confusione è ella stata & è tuttauia cagione a i piu empii adoratori dell' abomineuole Roma bestia. Quantunque io non solamente per questo rispetto ho voluto a voi dedicarla ; ma anchora per molti altri. Primieramente, per meglio sodisfare al desiderio de nostri pii : a quali senza fallo non potrà che sommamente esser caro, che la memoria di voi camini per la succession ditutti i fideli Italiani nella fronte impressa di quel libro, che douerà tra le lor mani essere, dopo la Scrittura sacra, sì perpetuo, come perpetui saran gl'inchiostri. Appresso, perche veggēdo molti, & io sperimentando quanto voi humanis. Signora per vostra bontà, & non per alcun merite mio vi degnate amarmi, & nel numero tenermi de vostri piu domestici & famigliari ; veggano allo'ncontro tutti, & voi chiaro comprendiate a qualche manifesto segno l'affettione & molta riuerenza che io porto al vostro gran valore & somma pietà. Et finalmente, perche facendomi bisogno, non di dare a questa mia fatica vn protettero o difensore ; conciosa cosa che i mordacissimi Zoili io non penso che habbian luogo nella Chiesa di Dio ; madí prouederla d'vn Personaggio, che con l'auttorità sua & sua verace testimonianza mi scusi appo ciascun fidele, che con ragion potesse dire, che io nella presente traduttione habbia in alcuna cosa mancato, sì come facilmente auenir puo : l'Illustriss. persona vostra fosse inanzi a qualunque altro quella, che a tutto cio abondeuolmente sodisfacesse. Percioche sempre che dalla bocca di voi s'vdirà testificare (come voi per certo così essere sapete) solamente de pochi mesi & giorni, che io spesi ho in tradurre vn'opera, la quale per comun giudicio di ciascun sauio sarebbe a molti lauoro di molti anni : stimo io, che non vi sia nessuno, che non habbia in cio ampia materia da scusarmi. Il che da voi ottenuto, sì come io spero, con quella benignità & prontezza d'animo, con che concedere solete all'altrui giuste dimande le

cose di gran via maggiori; lascierò che nel rimanente la mia traduttione si mostri ella da se stessa quel che è, per non parer che io vi cerchi forse alcuna mia quantunque minima laude. Anzi io lascierò che ne la mostri Dio, dal quale io la riconosco; & il quale sa, che non ad altro ho io mirato nel formarla, eccetto a quello, che da me s'è giudicato di douer tornare a maggior gloria del suo Nome, & a maggior vtilità della sua Chiesa. Donde è ancho auenuto, che hauendo l'Auttoe questo suo volume scritto prima in Latino, & poi in Frācesse; & molto piu chiaro & famigliare esser veggendosi nella Francese scrittura, che nella composition Latina, a dotti scriuendo, non curò perauentura d'essere; io mi sono eletto di volgerlo piu tosto dal Francese, che dal Latino, come pareua che piu si richiedesse. Percioche m'ho pensato, che cosi facendo, io non poteua a nostri huomini, che giouare maggiormente. Egli è bene il vero, ch'io non mi sono in modo astretto a seguire il testo Francese, che in molti luoghi, tralasciatolo, io non mi sia attenuto all'original Latino, secondo ho giudicato che cosi doueua farsi. Resta hora che io prieghi il Signor Dio, che si come per sua gratia questa cita ha gia molti anni hauuto in voi, & hauui anchora a questo dì vna viua imagine di tutte le Christiane virtù, che lungo sarebbe il raccontarle: cosi egli per sua bontà, & per l'amore del suo Christo vi dia il poterui costantemente perseverare infino al fine. In Geneua. Il quarto d'Agosto. M. D. LVIII.

Di V. Illustriss. Sig.

Affettionatiss. Giulio  
Cesare P.

INSTITUCION  
DE LA RELIGION CHRIS-  
TIANA; COMPUESTA EN QUATRO  
LIBROS, Y DIVIDIDA EN  
CAPITULOS.

*Por Juan Calvino.*

Y ahora nuevamente traducida en Romance  
Castellano, Por CYPRIANO  
DE VALERA.



En casa de Ricardo del Campo.





# A TODOS LOS FIE- LES DE LA NACION ESPA-

ñola que dessean el adelantamiento del

*reyno de Jesu Christo. Salud.*

Dos puntos ay, que comunmente mueven à los hombres à preciar mucho una cosa: el primero es, la excelencia de la cosa en si misma: el segundo, el provecho que recebimos ô esperamos della. Entre todos los dones y beneficios que Dios por su misericordia comunica sin cessar à los hombres, es el principal, y el mas excelente y provechoso el verdadero conocimiento de Dios, y de nuestro Señor Jesu Christo, el qual trae à los hombres una grande alegria y quietud de coraçon en esta vida, y la eterna gloria y felicidad despues desta vida. De manera que en este conocimiento consiste el sumo bien y la bienaventurança del hombre: como claramente lo declara la misma verdad Jesu Christo diziendo: Esta es la vida eterna que te cononcan solo Dios verdadero, y al que embiaste Jesu Christo. Y el Apostol S. Pablo despues que de Phariseo y perseguidor fue convertido à Christo, y avia conocido la grande excelencia deste conocimiento dize: Ciertamente todas las cosas tengo por perdida por el eminente conocimiẽto de Christo Jesus Señor mio, por amor del qual he perdido todo esto, y lo tengo por estiercol. Però como no ay cosa mas necessaria, ni mas provechosa al hõbre que este conocimiento, assiel Diablo enemigo de nuestra salud no ha cessado desde la creacion del mundo hasta el dia de hoy, ni cessara hasta la fin de se esforçar por todas las vias que puede, à privar los hombres deste thesoro, y escurecer en sus coraçones esta tan desseada luz que nos es embiada del cielo, para mejor enredar y tener captivos à los hombres en las tinieblas de ignorancia y supersticion.

La excelencia y utilidad del conocimiento de Dios.

Iuan. xvii. 3.

Phil. iii. 8.

El Diablo se esfuerça à quitar à los hombres este conocimiento.

Juan. viii. 44.

El Diablo se  
sirve de dos  
medios

Y como el Diablo ha sido homicida y padra de mētira desde el principio, assi siempre ha trabajado en oprimir la verdad, y à los que la cōflessan, ya por violencia y tyrania, ya por mentira y falsa doctrina. Para este fin se sirve por sus ministros no solamente de los enemigos de fuera, però aun tambien de los mismos domesticos que se glorian de ser el pueblo de Dios, y que tienen las apariencias externas. Por violencia mato Cain à su proprio hermano Abel: no por otra causa sino porque sus obras eran malas, y las de su hermano buenas. Esau pensava hazer lo mismo à su hermano Jacob, porque avia recebido la bendiciō de su padre. Saul persiguio à David el escogido y bien querido de Dios. Muchos reyes del pueblo de Israel dexando la ley y los mandamientos de Dios, han sido idolatras y matadores de los Prophetas, abusando en tal manera de su autoridad que no solamente pecavan, però hazian tambien pecar à Israel. Y llegó la miseria del pueblo de Israel à tanto, que se lee de Manasse (que reynó en Jerusalem 55. años) que derramó mucha sangre inocente en gran manera, hasta henchir à Jerusalem de cabo à cabo. Y como los reyes idolatras hizieron mal en los ojos de Dios, y lo provocaron à yra edificando los altos, que los pios reyes avian derribado, y persiguiendo los siervos de Dios, à los cuales devian defender con su autoridad: assi tambien se olvidaron de su dever los eclesiasticos y sacerdotes, que se gloriavā de la successiō de Aaron, y de que no podian errar en la ley. Porque muchas vezes ellos engañavan al pueblo, y resistian con gran vehemencia à los Prophetas de Dios, y tenian en gran numero falsos Prophetas que hablaban mentira, diziendo que Dios se lo avia mandado dezir assi: como manifestamente se vee en los quatrocientos Prophetas de Baal, los cuales todos à una boca por el esperitu de mentira engañavan à Achab Rey de Israel, acusando y injuriando à Micheas verdadero Propheta de Jehova. Por lo qual se quexaron tantas vezes los Prophetas de tales sacerdotes y falsos Prophetas: diziendo que avian sido, y eran la causa de la corrupcion del pueblo, y de su ruyna. Entre otros dize Jeremias, Que de los Prophetas de Ierusalen salió la impiedad sobre toda la tierra, y en el mismo capitulo: Assi el Propheta como el sacerdote son fingidos, aun en mi casa

1. Por violē  
cia y tyrania.  
Gen. iv. 8.  
1 Juan. iii. 12.  
Gen. xxvii.  
41.

1 Sam. xxiii.  
y xxiv.

2 Rey. xxi.  
1, 16.

2. Falsa doc-  
trina y men-  
tira.

Ier. xxiii. 15.

hallé su maldad, dixo Jehova. Por el Propheta Ezechiel Ezech. xxii. 25. dize Dios : La conjuracion de sus Prophetas en medio della, como leon bramando que arrebatara presa : tragaron animas, tomaron haziendas y honra, augmentaron sus biudas en medio della. Sus Sacerdotes hurtaron mi ley, y contaminaron mis Sanctuarios. Muchos otros lugares ay en los demas Prophetas que testifican lo mismo, y nos dan claramente à entender que los Israelitas so tales gobernadores fueron como ovejas perdidas, y que sus pastores los hizieron errar : como lo declara el Propheta Jeremias. Quã profunda aya sido en este pueblo la ignorãcia de Dios, se puede ver como en un espejo, en lo que acontecio en tiẽpo del pio Ier. i. 6. rey Jozias, à los 18. años de su reyno, quando Helcias gran sacerdote avia hallado el libro de la Ley en la casa de Jehova, y que el Rey oyó leer las palabras del libro de la Ley, como cosa nueva y nunca oyda. Lo qual movio de tal manera el coraçon del rey, aun siendo mancebo, que rompio sus vestidos, y se humilló delante de Dios : derribó los idolos y los altos, y hizo reformation segun la ley y palabra de Dios. Con todo esto despues de la muerte deste buen Rey, el pueblo tornó à idolatrar hasta que los Chaldeos destruyeron la ciudad de Jerusalem y el Templo, y llevaron el pueblo captivo à Babylonia. 2 Rey. xxli.

Despues de los 70. años de la captividad, Dios levantó sus siervos, instrumentos de su gracia, Esdras, Nehemias, Zerobabel, Josue, Zacharias, Aggeo, y otros, los quales bolviendo con el pueblo à Judea reedificaron la ciudad y el Templo, y sirvieron à Dios segun la ley. Però la avaricia y impiedad de los Sacerdotes creció luego otra vez, y multiplicóse en grã manera : como lo testifica Malachias, que fue el ultimo Propheta del Viejo Testamento : el qual ha sido constreñido à redarguyr asperamente à los impios Sacerdotes, diziendo : Ahora pues ô Sacerdotes, à vosotros es este mandamiento. Malach. ii. 1, 2. Sino oyerdes, y sino acordardes de dar gloria à mi nombre, dixo Jehova de los exercitos, embiarè maldicion sobre vosotros, y maldiré vuestras bendiciones : y aun las he maldicho, porque no poneys en vuestro coraçon. Y ten, Mas vosotros Malach. ii. 8, 9. os aveys apartado del camino, aveys hecho trompear à muchos en la ley : aveys corrompido el concierto de Levi, dixo

La condicion  
de la Iglesia  
despues de la  
captividad.



Jehova de los exercitos. Y yo tambiẽ os tornè viles y baxos à todo el pueblo, como vosotros no guardastes mis caminos. Por los quales testimonios es manifesto que la condicion de la Iglesia era entonces muy baxa y abatida.

Como se go-  
vernaron los  
perlados en  
Jerusalen en  
la venida de  
Christo,

Peró cõsideremos ahora tãbien como se governarõ los Sacerdotes y los perlados de Jerusalem quando el prometido Mexias Jesu Christo nuestro Señor, (que es el verdadero Sol de justicia y la luz del mũdo,) aparecio en Iudea. S. Iuã lo declara en pocas palabras diziẽdo de Christo: A lo que era suyo vino: y los suyos no lo recibierõ. El precursor de Christo Iuã Baptista llama à los Phariseos y Saduceos que venian à su bautismo, Generacion de bivoras, y no sin justa causa. Porque Christo no tuvo mayores adversarios, ni mas maliciosos, que à los sumos Sacerdotes y al senado de Jerusalẽ: los Phariseos y Escribas cabe ças del pueblo lo assechavan y calumniavan, enojandose de su doctrina. Por esta causa el Señor dize à los Principes de los sacerdotes y à

Iuan. i. 11.  
Mat. iii. 7.

Mat. xxi. 31.

los ancianos del pueblo: De cierto os digo que los publicanos, y las rameras os van delante al reyno de Dios. Muchas vezes grita Ay cõtra ellos llamãdolos Locos, ciegos, guyas ciegas, hypocritas, y hijos de aquellos que mataron à los Prophetas: y luego aũde: Vosotros tambien henchid lamedida de vuestros padres. Porque como sus padres aviansido matadores de los Prophetas y siervos de Dios, assi ellos desecharon al hijo y mataron al here dero, al qual entregaron y negaron delãte de Pilato dãdo bozes y diziendo: Crucificalo, Crucificalo. Tanta sue la obstinacion y dureza destos

Obstinacion  
y dureza de  
los perlados  
de Jerusalem  
despues de la  
Ascension de  
Christo.

Sacerdotes, que todos los milagros que acontecierõ en la muerte de Christo no movieron à arrepentimiento los coraçones destos malaventurados perlados. Porque no cessarõ despues de la ascension de Christo de perseguir à los Apostoles; procurãdo toda via impedir el curso del Evangelio, como se vee en los Actos de los Apostoles; y como S. Pablo lo declara en la primera Epistola à los Thessalonicenses, diziendo de los Judios, Que tambien mataron al Señor Jesus, y à sus Prophetas, y à nosotros nos han perseguido: y no son agradables à Dios, y à todos los hombres son enemigos. Defendiendonos que no hablemos à las gentes, paraque se salven: paraque hinchan sus pecados siẽpre: porque la yra de Dios los ha alcançado hasto el cabo.

1 Thes. ii  
15, 16.



A tanto pues llegó la ingratitud y impiedad de los Judios, que tenían tantas prerogativas y privilegios de ser llamados pueblo de Dios y pueblo santo, y que se gloriavā de los Padres, de la Circuncisiō, del Templo, y que tenían la Ley, las promessas y la successiō de Aaron : que con todo esto fueron una nacion torcida y perversa, duros de cerviz y incircuncisos de coraçon y de orejas, que resistiā siēpre al Espiritu sancto, y no perdonaron à los sanctos Prophetas, ni aun al hijo de Dios, el autor de vida, ni à sus Discipulos. Lo qual todo bien considerado nos devria a lumbrar el entendimiento, y enseñarnos que no es cosa nueva ni nunca oyda, que en estos dias postreros y vejez del mundo aya tanta ceguedad y ignorancia en el pueblo Christiano, y tanta corrupcion y malicia en los que presiden en la Iglesia, los quales con todo esto se glorian de grande sanctidad y de la succession de los Apostolos. Porque Christo nuestro Señora y sumo doctor avisādo à los suyos de lo que avia de acōtercer en el mundo acerca de la promulgacion de su Evāgelio hasta la fin del siglo, nos predize muy claramente todo esto, y dize, Que muchos han de venir en su nombre, y que muchos falsos Prophetas se levantaran, y que engañaran à muchos. y despues añide : Entonces os entregaran para ser afligidos, y mataros han : y sereys aborrecidos de todas naciones por causa de mi nombre : y muchos entonces seran escandalizados. Y el Apostol S. Pablo predize à los ancianos de Epheso : Yo se (dize) que despues de mi partida entraran en vosotros graves lobos que no perdonaran al ganado. Lo qual el mismo Apostol explica mas amplamēte en la segunda Epistola à los Thessalonicenses, quando avisa à los fieles que à la venida del Señor es menester que preceda una general apostasia de su Iglesia, causada por el hombre de pecado, el hijo de perdicion, el qual se levante cōtra todo lo que se llama Dios, y se assiente en el templo de Dios como Dios, dando à entender que es Dios. En la primera Epistola à Timotheo escribe el mismo Apostol : El Espiritu dize manifestamente, que en los postreros tiempos algunos apostataran de la fe, escuchādo à espíritus de error, y à doctrinas de demonios : Que con hypocrisia hablaran mentira teniendo cauterizada la consciencia : Que prohibiran el matrimonio, y mandaran abstenerse los hombres de las viandas que Dios

En vano se glorian de sus privilegios, los que resisten al Espiritu sancto y persiguen à los pios. Act. vii. 51, 52.

Christo y sus Apostolos nos predizen los peligros de los dias postreros. Mat. xxiv. 11.

Act. xx. 29.

2 Thes. ii. 3, 4.

1 Tim. iv. 1, 2, 3.

Los Doctores falsos defienden el matri-

monio, y las  
viandas que  
Dios crió.  
2 Tim. iii. 1,  
2.  
vers. 5.  
vers. 7, 8.  
2 Tim. iv. 3,  
4.  
2 Ped. ii. 1,  
2, 3.  
crió. Y ten en la segunda Epistola à Timotheo, Esto emperō  
sepas que en los postreros dias, vendran tiempos peligrosos.  
Porque avrá hombres amadores de si, avaros, gloriosos,  
sobervios, maldizientes, &c. y luego añade, Teniendo el  
aparencia de piedad, mas negando la eficacia della. y des-  
pues : Que siēpre aprenden, y nunca pueden acabar de llegar  
al conocimiento de la verdad. Y de la manera que Jannes  
y Jambres resistieron à Moysen, assi tambiē estos resisten à  
la verdad : hombres corruptos de entendimiento, reprobos à  
cerca de la fe. y en el capitulo siguiente escribe : Que vendra  
tiempo quando no suffiran la sana doctrina : antes teniendo  
comezon en las orejas se amontonaran maestros que les  
hablen conforme à sus cōcupiscencias, y assi apartaran de la  
verdad el oydo, y bolverse han à las fabulas. Assi el Apostol  
S. Pedro describe la impiedad de los falsos doctores que  
avian de venir, diziendo : Empero hubo tambien falsos Pro-  
phetas en el pueblo, como avra entre vosotros falsos doctores,  
que introduziran encubiertamente sectas de perdicion, y  
negaran al Señor que los rescató, trayendo sobre si mismos  
apressurada perdiciō : y muchos seguiran sus perdiciones :  
por los quales el camino de la verdad sera blasphemado : y  
por avaricia haran mercaderia de vosotros con palabras fin-  
gidas.

El espíritu  
sancto confir-  
ma la fe de  
los fieles con-  
tra los escan-  
dolos.

Por estas tan claras y señaladas Prophecias quiso el Espi-  
ritu sancto confirmar nuestra fe, paraque no fuessemos  
escandalizados por la grāde apostasia que avia de acontecer  
en la Iglesia : ni por las afliciones y crueles persecuciones  
que aviā de padecer los fieles por la cōfession de Christo y  
de su verdad. Quando pues en estos ultimos dias vemos  
claramente el cumplimiēto destas Prophecias, es menester  
que consideremos ninguna cosa ahora acontecer, sino lo que  
por la providencia de Dios acontecio à los pios en tiempos  
passados : y que todo esto ha sido muy expressamēte predi-  
cho por la boca de Christo y de sus Apostoles : como los  
testimonios que ya avemos alegado lo testifican. Los adver-  
sarios y perseguidores de los fieles no pueden negar estas  
Prophecias, y confessaran juntamente con nosotros que mu-  
chos engañadores y falsos doctores han salido en el mundo,  
que engañan à muy muchos, de los quales cada uno se deve

con diligencia guardar. Però no confessaran que ellos mismos sean esto falsos Prophetas : mas acusan falsamente por tales à los fieles siervos de Christo : como en tiempos passados hizo el rey Achab, acusando al Propheta Elias de que el alborotava à Israel. De manera que aunque todos en general confessen el gran peligro que ay de los engañadores, con todo esto muy pocos saben y entienden quales sean estos engañadores. Por tanto me parece que no sera fuera de proposito, mostrar aqui una regla cierta y vieldadera, por la qual siēdo ayudado y alumbrado el lector Christiano podra facilmente distinguyr y hazer differēcia entre los fieles siervos de Christo y los engañadores : paraque todos sepan y conoscan aquellos à quien devan oyr y seguir : y quales por el contrario devan detestar, y huyr, conforme al mandamiento de Christo. Esto no se podria jamas entender por el corrupto juyzio y entendimiento humano, el qual como peso falso es abominaciō delāte de Dios : sino por la sabiduria celestial que nos es revelada en la sagrada escritura, la qual es peso fiel y verdadero que agrada à Dios. Veamos pues quien sean los que siguen la palabra de Dios, y quien sean los que la dexan y se apartan della.

Mandó Dios à su pueblo muy estrechamente, diziendoles : No añidireys à la palabra que yo os mādo, ni disminuyreys della. y Christo antes de su Ascension embiando sus Apostoles à predicar el Evāgelio por todo el mūdo, les da este precepto : Id, enseñad à todas las gentes, baptizandolos en el nombre del Padre, y del Hijo, y del Espiritu sancto : enseñandoles que guardē todas las cosas que os he mandado. El Apostol S. Pablo escribe à los Corinthios, Que nadie puede poner otro fundamento sino el que está puesto, el qual es Iesu Christo. y en la misma Epistola : Yo recebi del Señor lo que tambien os he enseñado. El Apostol S. Pedro hablando de los enseñadores dize : Si alguno enseña, hable conforme à las palabras de Dios. Aquel que con atencion considerare estos testimonios, como deven ser considerados, muy facilmente entendera que no son falsos doctores ni nuevos los que enseñan al pueblo la pura doctrina del Evangelio sin añidir ni disminuir, testificando que Iesu Christo es el cordero de Dios que quita los pecados del mundo, y

1 Rey. xviii.  
17.

Como se  
deven differ-  
enciar los  
fieles siervos  
de Christo de  
los engaña-  
dores.

Prov. xi. 1.

Deut. iv. 20,  
y xii. 32.

Mat. xxviii.  
19, 20.

1 Cor. iii. 11.

1 Cor. xi. 23.

1 Ped. iv. 11.

Quien seā  
fieles Pas-  
y ver-  
a doc-

Iuan. i. 29.  
Iuan. xiv. 6.



que el es el camino, y la verdad, y la vida, y que ninguno viene al Padre sino por el. Y ten, Que en ningun otro ay salud: y que no ay otro nombre debaxo del cielo dado à los hombres en que podamos ser salvos. Y ten, que sin Christo nada podemos hazer, y que no somos sufficientes de nosotros mismos para pensar algo, como de nosotros mismos: sino que nuestra sufficiencia es de Dios. Esta es la doctrina de Christo anunciada en el mundo por sus Apostoles, y por consiguiente es doctrina sana, antigua y verdaderamente Catholica y Apostolica, por la qual los hombres alcãgan el verdadero conocimiento de Christo para consolacion y salud de sus animas. Los que la predicán el dia de hoy en las Iglesias reformadas no son engañadores ni doctores nuevos, y aquellos que la oyen, confessan y siguē (como es el dever de todo fiel y Catholico Christiano) no son engañados, mas se fundan y estriban sobre el fundamēto verdadero, solido y antiguo: aunque el mundo los acusa y calumnia como à alborotadores del pueblo, y los condena como à hereges. Mas estos son los engañadores y falsos enseñadores, los que hã sido, ô son tã atrevidos de añidir, ô disminuir algo en la palabra de Dios, mādãdo lo que Dios prohíbe, ô prohibiendo lo que su Majestad manda. De manera que obedeciendo à estos no es possible juntamente obedecer y agradar à Christo: y para obedecer y seguir à Christo es menester apartarse y huir destos como de guyas ciegas, los quales siēdo otros nuevos Phariseos han invalida do el mandamiento de Dios por sus preceptos, hōrãdo à Dios en vano, enseñando doctrinas, madamientos de hombres. Tales son los enseñadores y perlados de la Iglesia Romana, los quales dexando las pisadas de los Apostoles y el mandamiento de Christo, no apacientan las ovejas con el verdadero mantenimiēto de las animas, que es la palabra de Dios: però ocupãdose en vanas ceremonias y tradiciones humanas detienen el pueblo en una crassissima ignorãcia, engañandolo con externo aparato y resplandor y con muy magnificos titulos. Porque gloriandose de ser vicarios de Christo, alexan al pueblo Christiano de la obediencia, y del salutifero conocimiento de Christo: y so pretexto y color que no pueden errar, han henchido la Christiãdad de infinitos errores y supersticiones, directamente

Act. iv. 12.

Juan. xv. 5.

2 Cor. iii. 5.

Quin seã los  
engañadores.

Mat. xv. 6.

Mat. xv. 9.



repugnantes à la doctrina de Dios. Lo qual se puede manifestamente provar por los testimonios siguientes.

\* Dios prohíbe muy expressamente en el segundo mandamiento de su Ley, el culto de las imagines. Ellos quebrantaron esta Ley, y desechando este mandamiento mandaron que las imagines se hiziessen, y se honrassen, y adorassen contra el mandamiento de Dios. Dios manda que su pueblo lea y medite su Ley, y Christo manda en el nuevo Testamento escudriñar la Escritura, la qual da testimonio del. Ellos se oponen à este mandamiento, y prohíben severamente la lecion de la sagrada Escritura, como si fuesse ponçoña: Christo nuestro redemptor combida à si muy benignamēte à todos los trabajados y cargados, y les promete que hallarā descāso para sus animas. Estos, por el contrario enseñan à los hombres otros mil caminos para hallar salud por indulgencias, satisfacciones, missas, meritos y intercessiones de sanctos: como si en la persona de Christo no se hallasse perfecta salud: dexando desta manera las consciencias en una perpetua inquietud y congoxa. Y como ellos por tales desvarios privan à Dios de su honra, y al pueblo de Dios del pasto y conforto de sus animas, assí semejantemente privan tambien à las potestades superiores, y à todos los que estan en eminencia de la hōra y obediencia que se les deve. Porque ellos dominan y se enseñorean no solamente sobre el pueblo de Dios contra lo que enseña S. Pedro: pero aun tambien tomā autoridad y Señorío sobre los Reyes, Principes y grandes de la tierra. Y aunque S. Pablo claramente enseña que toda anima (sin excepciō ninguna) deve ser sujeta à las potestades superiores, y la razon que da, es porque son ordenadas de Dios: con todo esso estos con una sobervia y desvergüença intolerable se sirven de los Reyes, Principes, y Magistrados Christianos como de sus ministros para executar sus crueldades y persecuciones contra los fieles miēbros de Christo, que no confessan ni mantienen otra doctrina que la de Christo: y no buscan, ni esperā salud sino por el que es el solo autor de vida. De donde se puede concluyr que de tales perlados y maestros del pueblo, con muy grā razon se puede dezir, lo que el Propheta Esayas dize de los que en su tiempo presidiā en la Iglesia de Jerusalem: Los Governadores

• Los engañadores mādān lo que Dios prohíbe, y prohiben lo que Christo manda. Exod. xx. 6. Deut. vi. 7, y xi. 19. Iuan. v. 39. Veed el Concilio Niceno 2. que ia Emperatriz Irene convocó. Mat. xi. 28.

1 Ped. v. 3.  
Rom. xiii. 1.

Essay. ix. 15.

deste pueblo son engañadores, y los que por ellos son gobernados, perdidos.

Los Christianos deven oyr y seguir à Christo, y se guardar de los falsos doctores y guyas ciegas.

Mat. vii. 15.

Mat. xv. 14.

Act. ii. 40.

2 Cor. vi. 17.

Revel. xviii. 4.

Revel. xviii. 23, 24.

Dios tomara en mano la causa de sus fieles.

Psal. cxvi. 15.

Deut. xxxii. 36.

Psal. cxxxv. 14.

Psal. lxxii. 17.

Revel. ii. 2, 9.

Por tanto siendo el peligro tan grande y tan evidente, y la calamidad de la Iglesia tan extrema, es nos menester que como ovejas de Christo, dexando à estos estraños, pues que son lobos, conozcamos, sigamos y oygamos la boz de nuestro verdadero y fiel pastor, acordandonos del aviso que Christo nuestro Señor dio à los suyos diziendo: Guardaos de los falsos Prophetas que vienen à vosotros con vestidos de ovejas: mas de dentro son lobos robadores: por sus frutos los conocereys. Y en otro lugar: Dexaldos, guias son ciegas de ciegos: y si el ciego guiare al ciego, ambos caeran en el hoyo. Acordemonos tambien de la exhortacion que hizo S. Pedro à los fieles en Ierusalen: Guardaos desta perversa generacion. Y de lo que escribe S. Pabla à los Corinthios, diziendo: Salid de en medio dellos, y apartaos, dize el Señor, y no toqueys cosa immunda, y yo os recibire. Y ten S. Iuan en su Revelacion tratando de la cayda de la gran Babylonia, dize: Salid della pueblo mio, porque no seays participâtes de sus pecados, y que no recibays de sus plagas. Porque sus pecados han llegado hasta el cielo: y Dios se ha acordado de sus maldades. y despues añide: Cuyos mercaderes erã Principes de la tierra, en cuyas hechizerias todas las gentes han errado. y en ella es hallada la sangre de los Prophetas y de los sanctos, y de todos los que han sido muertos en la tierra.

Estas sentencias y graves amonestaciones del Señor devrian con muy grã razon sonar como trompetas en las orejas de todos aquellos que aun estan adormecidos en las profundas tinieblas de ignorancia: paraque de veras se despertassen del sueño, y renunciassen à los engañadores, que con sus idolatrias y supersticiones han profanado el santuario de Dios, y han sido la causa de tãto derramamiêto de sangre Christiana y inocente, y no cessan aun de atizar el fuego de persecuciones y discordias entre los Principes Christianos. Però el todo poderoso Dios, que es justo juez y padre de misericordia (en cuyos ojos la muerte de los pios es estimada) tomara en mano sin duda ninguna la causa de sus fieles, y como dize la Escritura, juzgara à su pueblo, y sobre sus siervos se arrepentira: y redimira sus animas del engaño y violencia. Porque

el sabe los trabajos, y las tribulaciones, y la paciēcia de los suyos, y está con ellos en la aficiō, y no se olvida del clamor de los pobres. La sangre de los pios siendo preciosa en sus ojos, clama sin cessar à el de la tierra como se lee de la sangre de Abel: y Dios (como dize David) se acuerda della. Lo qual por su providencia admirable, manifestamente ha declarado en nuestros dias, quando con todos los fuegos, carceles y cuchillos de los perseguidores no ha sido apagada la luz de la verdad, però por el contrario ha sido mas amplamēte propagada en muchos regnos y pueblos de la tierra. De manera que por la experiēcia nos ha sido confirmada la notable sentencia de Tertuliano, que dize: La sangre de los Martyres es la simiente de la Iglesia. Consideremos tambien quan benignamēte Dios, para cōsolacion de los suyos, ha levantado por su bondad y defendido por su potencia algunos pios Reyes y Principes verdaderamente Christianos, los quales, obedeciendo à la Ley y al mandamiento de Dios, y imitando à los pios Reyes de los tiēpos passados, hā derribado los idolos y restituydo la pura doctrina del Evāgelio, y han abierto sus Reynos y tierras para que fuesen refugio y amparo de los fieles, que como ovejas descarriadas por aca y por aculla escaparon de las manos sangrientas de los Inquisidores. Quantos millares y millares de pobres estrangeros se han acogido à Inglaterra, (dexo de nombrar otros Reynos y Republicas) por salvar sus consciencias y vidas, donde so la proteccion y amparo, prime ramente de Dios, y despues de la serenissima Reyna doña Isabel han sido defendidos y amparados contra la tyrania del Antechristo y de sus hijos los Inquisidores? En lo qual se vee cumplido lo que Dios prometio por su Propheta, Que los Reyes avian de sér ayos, y las Reynas amas de lecha de la Iglesia. El mismo Dios por su infinita misericordia ha levātado tambien otros instrumētos de su gracia: es a saber, pios doctores, que como fieles siervos de Christo y verdaderos pastores apacentaron la manada de Christo con la sana doctrina del Evangelio, y la divulgaron no solamente de boca, però tambien por sus libros y escritos: por los quales comunicaron el talento que avian recebido del Señor à muchos pueblos y naciones del mundo. En este numero ha sido el doctissimo interprete de la sagrada

Psal. xci. 15.  
Psal. ix. 13.  
Psal. lxxii.  
14.  
Gene. iv. 10.  
Psal. ix. 13.  
La providencia admirable de Dios en la propagacion de la verdad.  
Exod. xxxiii. 24.  
2 Rey. xviii. 4.  
2 Rey. xxii. 4, 5, 6, &c.

Essay. xlix.  
23.



Escritura Juan Calvino autor desta Institucion, en la qual el trata muy pura y sinceramente los puntos y articulos que tocan à la religion Christiana, confirmando solidamente todo lo que enseña con la autoridad de la sagrada Escritura, y confuta con la palabra de Dios los errores y heregias, conforme al dever de un enseñador Christiano: el qual dividio esta su Institucion en quatro libros.

Los sumarios  
de los 4  
libros desta  
Institucion

En el primer libro trata del conocimiento de Dios, en quanto es Criador y supremo governador de todo el mundo. En el segundo, trata del conocimiento de Dios redemptor en Christo, el qual conocimiento ha sido manifestado primera-mente à los Padres debaxo de la Ley, y à nosotros despues en el Evangelio. En el tercero declara, que manera aya para participar de la gracia de Jesu Christo, y que provechos nos vengan de aqui, y de los effectos que se sigan. En el quarto trata de los medios externos, por los quales Dios nos combida à la comunicacion de Christo, y nos retiene en ella. De manera que en estos quatro libros son muy Christinamente declarados todos los principales articulos de la religion Christiana y verdaderamente Catholica y Apostolica. Assique todo lo que cada fiel Christiano deve saber y entender de la fe, de las buenas obras, de la oracion, y de las marcas externas de la Iglesia, es ampla y sinceramēte explicado en esta Institucion, como facilmente Juzgara cada uno que la leyer con atencion y sin passion, ni opinion prejudicada. Esto solamēte rogare al benevolo y Christiano lector, que no sea apasionado ni preocupado en su juyzio por las grandissimas calumnias y injurias, con las quales los adversarios se essuerçan à hazer odiosissimos todos los escritos y aun el mismo nombre de Calvino, como si fuesse engañador y sembrador de heregias. Mas que se acuerde de usar de la regla que antes avemos puesto para hazer differencia entre los verdaderos enseñadores y los falsos: y hallara claramente que la doctrina contenida en esta Instituciō es orthodoxa, Catholica y Christiana: y que los adversarios, siendo escurecidos y pervertidos en su juyzio, llaman à la luz tinieblas, y à las tinieblas luz, en lo qual son imitadores de aquellos, contra quien el Señor denuncia Ay por su Propheta. Algunos años ha que esta Instituciō ha sido trasladada en diversas lēguas con grā fruto de todos a quellos



que aman la verdad, y que dessean aprovechar en el conocimiento de Christo para su salud. Ahora sale à luz por la misericordia de Dios en lengua Española, en la qual yo la he trasladado para servir à mi nacion, y pare adelantar el reyno de Jesu Christo en nuestra España, tan miserablemente anegada en unabysmo de Idolatria, ignorancia y supersticiones mantenidas por la tyrania de los Inquisidores contra la Ley y palabra de Dios, y con grandissimo agravio de todos los fieles Christianos : los quales siguiendo la doctrina de Christo dessean como varones prudentes edificar su casa y fundar su se sobre la firme peña de la verdad : y no sobre arena, que son las doctrinas y tradiciones inventadas de los hombres.

El miserable estrado de España.

Mat. vii. 24.

Yo dedico este mi trabajo à todos los fieles de la nacion Española, sea que aun giman so el yugo de la inquisicion, ô que sean esparzidos y desterrados por tierras ajenas. Las causas que me han movido à esto, han sido tres principales. La primera es la gratitud que devo à mi Dios y padre celestial, al qual le plugo por su infinita misericordia sacarme de la potestad de las tinieblas, y traspasarme en el reyno de su amado hijo nuestro Señor : el qual nos manda, que siendo convertidos, confirmemos à nuestros hermanos. La segunda causa es, el grande y encendido desseo que tengo de adelantar por todos los medios que puedo, la conversion, el conforto y la salud de mi nacion : la qual à la verdad tiene zelo de Dios, mas no cõforme à la voluntad y palabra de Dios. Porque ellos ignorando la justicia de Dios, y procurando de establecer la suya por sus propias obras, meritos y satisfacciones humanas, no son sujetos à la justicia de Dios, y no entienden que Christo sea el fin de la Ley para justicia à qualquiera que cree. La tercera causa que me ha movido, es la gran falta, carestia y necessidad que nuestra España tiene de libros que contengan la sana doctrina, por los quales los hombres puedan ser instruydos en la doctrina de piedad, paraque desenredados de las redes y lazos del demonio sean salvos. Tanta ha sido la astucia y malicia de nuestros adversarios, que sabiendo muy bien que por medio de buenos libros sus idolatrias, supersticiones, y engaños serian descubiertos, han puesto (como nuevos Antiocos) toda diligẽcia para destruyr y que-

Tres causas de la dedicaciõ deste libro. Col. i. 13. Luc. xxii. 32.

Rom. x. 2, 3.

Quãta ha sido la astucia y malicia de los adversarios.

mar los buenos libros, paraque el misero pueblo fesse toda via detenido en el captiverio de ignorancia, la qual ellos, sin verguen ça ninguna, han llamado Madre de devocion. En loqual directamente contradizen à Jesu Christo, que enseña muy expressamente en el Evangelio la ignorancia ser causa y madre de errores, diziendo à los Sadduceos : Errays ignorando las Escrituras y la potencia de Dios.

Mat. xxii. 29.

I  
d  
i  
I  
Amone-  
stacion à  
todos los  
Españoles.

Aqui pues es menester que yo suplique à todos los de mi nacion, que dessean, buscan y pretenden ser salvos, que no sean mal avisodes ni negligentes en el negocio de su salud : però que como conviene à Christianos, den lugar à la doctrina de Christo, el qual nos ha revelado y manifestado los mysterios de nuestra redêpcion, y la voluntad de su padre celestial, del qual tenenos testimonio y mandado del cielo que lo devemos oyr. Que mayor desvario se puede imaginar que preferir la boz de los hombres à la de Dios : la mentira à la verdad, y la idolatria y supersticion à la obediencia de Christo y de su Evangelio? Que mayor locura que dexar lasuente de agua biva, por cavarse cisternas rotas que no detienen aguas? No es Christo el fiel y buen pastor de nuestras animas, y su palabra no es la misma verdad, como el mismo lo testifica? No es el, el que tan graciosamente combida à si à todos los sedientos, y à los que no tienen dinero, y les promete de regalarlos y hartarlos? Porque pues olvidandose los hombres de estas promessas, gastan su dinero y su trabago donde no ay pan ni hartura? Porque buscan y piden de otros la gracia y ayuda que solo Christo tiene y puede dar? Acuerdense los tales que en tiempos passados se quexava el Señor de una semejante ingratitud de su pueblo : Que maldad (dize) hallaron en mi vuestros padres, que se alexaron de mi, y se fueron tras la vanidad y tornaronse vanos? y luego añade : Bolvieron me las espaldas, y no el rostro. Y por otro Propheta dize. Estendi mis manos todo el dia al pueblo rebelde, que camina por camino no bueno empos de sus pensamientos. Abrid pues los ojos ô Españoles, y dexando à los que os engañan, obedeced à Christo y à su palabra, la qual sola es firme y inmutable para siempre. Estribad y fundad vuestra se sobre el verda dero fundamento de los Prophetas y Apostoles, y la sola Cabeça de su Iglesia.

Mat. xvii. 5.

Ier. ii. 13.

Iuan. xvii.  
17.

Essay. lv. 1, 2.

Ierem. ii. 5.

Ier. ii. 27.

Essay. lxxv. 2,  
3.

Porque teneys en poco al Señor y à sus mandamientos, y os sujetays à el hombre de pecado, que os aparta de Christo y de vuestra salud? Porque preciays tanto su dañosa doctrina con la qual el enreda las consciencias, y apacienta las animas conuiento de vanidad? Si quereys muy claramente ver y entender esto, escudriñad solamente y considerad con atencion la doctrina de Christo y los Actos de los Apostoles, cotejandolos con los actos y historias de los Papas de Roma, y hallareys manifestamente que ay tanta diferencia entre ellos, quanta ay entre la luz y las tinieblas, y entre la apariencia, ô sombra, y el cuerpo.

Como se puede entender la differencia que ay entre Christo y los Papas de Roma.

Portanto hermanos mios muy amados en Christo, mirad por vosotros, tened cuenta con vuestra salud, pensad de veras qual sea vuestro dever. No recibays en vano la gracia de Dios, que se os ofrece por la predicacion del Evangelio, <sup>2 Cor. xvi.</sup> por el qual el piadoso Dios estiende las manos de su misericordia para sacar à los ignorantes del hoyo y lodo de ignorancia à su conocimiento y comunion. Por lo qual si oyeredes hoy su boz (como dize el Propheta) no endurezcays vuestro <sup>Psal. xcvi. 11.</sup> coraçon: mas antes desechando las doctrinas, y tradiciones de los hombres mentirosos y enganadores, oyd à aquel que no puede mentir, seguid à aquel que no puede errar: paraque el <sup>Iuan. xiv. 6.</sup> nombre del Señor sea sanctificado en neustra España, y que muchos siendo instruidos por la palabra de Dios, se conviertan de las tinieblas à la luz, paraque reciban por la fe en Jesu Christo remission de pecados, <sup>Act. xxvi. 18.</sup> y la vida y bienaventurança eterna.

Amen.

20. de Septiembre. 1597.

*Vuestro muy aficionado en el Senor.*  
C. D. V.

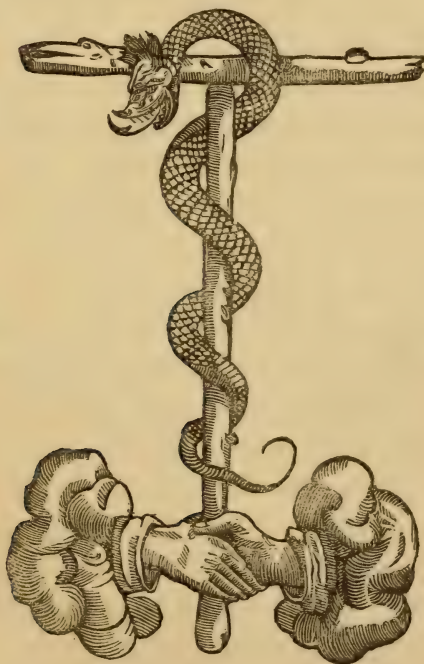




# THE INSTITVTION OF

The Christian Religion, vvrytten in Latine, by maister Ihon Caluin, and translated into Englysh according to the authors last edition.

20 *Seen and allowed according to the order appointed in the Quenes maiesties iniunctions.*



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**W**heras some men haue thought and reported it to be [very great neg]ligence in vs for that we haue so long kept backe from you [this,] being so profitable a woozke for you, namely lithe maister I[ohnne] Dawes had translated it and deliuered it into our handes moze than a tweluemoneth past: you shall vnderstande for our excuse in that behalfe, that we could not wel imprinte it soner. For we haue ben by diuerse necessarie causes constrainned with our earnest entreatance to procure an other frende of oures to translate it whole agayn. This translation, we trust, you shal well allow. For it hath not only ben saythfully done by the translator himself, but also hath ben wholly perused by such men, whoes iugement and credit al the godly learned in Englande well knowe & esteeme. But lithe it is now come forth, we pray you accept it, and vse it. If any faultes haue passed vs by ouersight, we beseeche you let vs haue your patience, as you haue had our diligence.

T H E

# Institution of Christian

Religion, written in Latine

by *M. John Caluine*, and tran-

slated into English according to the

Authors last edition, with sundry Tables

to finde the principall matters entreated of

in this booke, and also the declara-

tion of places of Scripture

therein expounded,

B Y

THOMAS NORTON.

Whereunto there are newly added in the  
margin of the booke, notes containing  
in briebe the substance of the matter  
handled in each Section.



Printed at London by Arnold Hatfield,  
*for Bonham Norton.*





THE  
ORIGINAL TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

PREFIXED TO THE FOURTH EDITION 1581, AND REPRINTED *verbatim* IN  
ALL THE SUBSEQUENT EDITIONS.

T[HOMAS] N[ORTON,] THE TRANSLATOR TO THE READER.

GOOD READER, here is now offered you, the fourth time printed in English, M. Calvin's book of the Institution of Christian Religion; a book of great labour to the author, and of great profit to the Church of God. M. Calvin first wrote it when he was a young man, a book of small volume, and since that season he hath at sundry times published it with new increases, still protesting at every edition himself to be one of those *qui scribendo proficiunt, et proficiendo scribunt, which with their writing do grow in profiting, and with their profiting do proceed in writing*. At length having, in many [of] his other works, travelled about exposition of sundry books of the Scriptures, and in the same finding occasion to discourse of sundry common-places and matters of doctrine, which being handled according to the occasions of the text that were offered him, and not in any other method, were not so ready for the reader's use, he therefore entered into this purpose to enlarge this book of Institutions, and therein to treat of all those titles and common-

places largely, with this intent, that whensoever any occasion fell in his other books to treat of any such cause, he would not newly amplify his books of commentaries and expositions therewith, but refer his reader wholly to this store-house and treasure of that sort of divine learning. As age and weakness grew upon him, so he hastened his labour; and, according to his petition to God, he in manner ended his life with his work, for he lived not long after.

So great a jewel was meet to be made most beneficial, that is to say, applied to most common use. Therefore, in the very beginning of the Queen's Majesty's most blessed reign, I translated it out of Latin into English for the commodity of the Church of Christ, at the special request of my dear friends of worthy memory, Reginald Wolfe and Edward Whitchurch, the one her Majesty's printer for the Hebrew, Greek, and Latin tongues, the other her Highness' printer of the books of Common Prayer. I performed my work in the house of my said friend, Edward Whitchurch, a man well known of upright heart and dealing, an ancient zealous gospeller, as plain and true a friend as ever I knew living, and as desirous to do anything to common good, especially by the advancement of true religion.

At my said first edition of this book, I considered how the author thereof had of long time purposely laboured to write the same most exactly, and to pack great plenty of matter in small room of words; yea, and those so circumspectly and precisely ordered, to avoid the cavillations of such as for enmity to the truth therein contained would gladly seek and abuse all advantages which might be found by any oversight in penning of it, that the sentences were thereby become so full as nothing might well be added without idle superfluity, and again so nighly pared, that nothing could be minished without taking away some necessary substance of matter therein expressed. This manner of writing, beside the peculiar terms of arts and figures, and the difficulty of the matters themselves, being throughout interlaced with the schoolmen's controversies, made a great hardness in the author's own book, in that tongue wherein otherwise he is both plentiful and easy, insomuch

that it sufficeth not to read him once, unless you can be content to read in vain. This consideration encumbered me with great doubtfulness for the whole order and frame of my translation. If I should follow the words, I saw that of necessity the hardness in the translation must needs be greater than was in the tongue wherein it was originally written. If I should leave the course of words, and grant myself liberty after the natural manner of my own tongue, to say that in English which I conceived to be his meaning in Latin, I plainly perceived how hardly I might escape error, and on the other side, in this matter of faith and religion, how perilous it was to err. For I durst not presume to warrant myself to have his meaning without his words. And they that wot what it is to translate well and faithfully, especially in matters of religion, do know that not the only grammatical construction of words sufficeth, but the very building and order to observe all advantages of vehemence or grace, by placing or accent of words, maketh much to the true setting forth of a writer's mind.

In the end, I rested upon this determination, to follow the words so near as the phrase of the English tongue would suffer me. Which purpose I so performed, that if the English book were printed in such paper and letter as the Latin is, it should not exceed the Latin in quantity. Whereby, beside all other commodities that a faithful translation of so good a work may bring, this one benefit is moreover provided for such as are desirous to attain some knowledge of the Latin tongue, (which is, at this time, to be wished in many of those men for whose profession this book most fitly serveth,) that they shall not find any more English than shall suffice to construe the Latin withal, except in such few places where the great difference of the phrases of the languages enforced me: so that, comparing the one with the other, they shall both profit in good matter, and furnish themselves with understanding of that speech, wherein the greatest treasures of knowledge are disclosed.

In the doing hereof, I did not only trust mine own wit or ability, but examined my whole doing from sentence to sen-



tence throughout the whole book with conference and overlooking of such learned men, as my translation being allowed by their judgment, I did both satisfy mine own conscience that I had done truly, and their approving of it might be a good warrant to the reader that nothing should herein be delivered him but sound, unmingled, and uncorrupted doctrine, even in such sort as the author himself had first framed it. All that I wrote, the grave, learned, and virtuous man, M. David Whitehead, (whom I name with honourable remembrance,) did, among others, compare with the Latin, examining every sentence throughout the whole book. Beside all this, I privately required many, and generally all men with whom I ever had any talk of this matter, that if they found anything either not truly translated, or not plainly Englished, they would inform me thereof, promising either to satisfy them or to amend it. Since which time, I have not been advertised by any man of anything which they would require to be altered. Neither had I myself, by reason of my profession, being otherwise occupied, any leisure to peruse it. And that is the cause, why not only at the second and third time, but also at this impression, you have no change at all in the work, but altogether as it was before.

Indeed, I perceived many men well-minded and studious of this book, to require a table for their ease and furtherance. Their honest desire I have fulfilled in the second edition, and have added thereto a plentiful table, which is also here inserted, which I have translated out of the Latin, wherein the principal matters discoursed in this book are named by their due titles in order of alphabet, and under every title is set forth a brief sum of the whole doctrine taught in this book concerning the matter belonging to that title or common-place; and therewith is added the book, chapter, and section or division of the chapter, where the same doctrine is more largely expressed and proved. And for the readier finding thereof, I have caused the number of the chapters to be set upon every leaf in the book, and quoted the sections also by their due numbers with the usual figures of algorism. And now at this last publishing,



my friends, by whose charge it is now newly imprinted in a Roman letter and smaller volume, with divers other Tables which, since my second edition, were gathered by M. Marlorate, to be translated and here added for your benefit.

Moreover, whereas in the first edition the evil manner of my scribbling hand, the interlining of my copy, and some other causes well known among workmen of that faculty, made very many faults to pass the printer, I have, in the second impression, caused the book to be composed by the printed copy, and corrected by the written; whereby it must needs be that it was much more truly done than the other was, as I myself do know above three hundred faults amended. And now at this last printing, the composing after a printed copy bringeth some ease, and the diligence used about the correction having been right faithfully looked unto, it cannot be but much more truly set forth. This also is performed, that the volume being smaller, with a letter fair and legible, it is of more easy price, that it may be of more common use, and so to more large communicating of so great a treasure to those that desire Christian knowledge for instruction of their faith, and guiding of their duties. Thus, on the printer's behalf and mine, your ease and commodity (good readers) is provided for. Now resteth your own diligence, for your own profit, in studying it.

To spend many words in commending the work itself were needless; yet thus much I think, I may both not untruly and not vainly say, that though many great learned men have written books of common-places of our religion, as Melancthon, Sarcerius, and others, whose works are very good and profitable to the Church of God, yet by the consenting judgment of those that understand the same, there is none to be compared to this work of Calvin, both for his substantial sufficiency of doctrine, the sound declaration of truth in articles of our religion, the large and learned confirmation of the same, and the most deep and strong confutation of all old and new heresies; so that (the Holy Scriptures excepted) this is one of the most profitable books for all students of Christian divinity. Wherein, (good readers,) as I am glad for the glory of God, and for your benefit,

that you may have this profit of my travel, so I beseech you let me have this use of your gentleness, that my doings may be construed to such good end as I have meant them ; and that if any thing mislike you by reason of hardness, or any other cause that may seem to be my default, you will not forthwith condemn the work, but read it after ; in which doing you will find (as many have confessed to me that they have found by experience) that those things which at the first reading shall displease you for hardness, shall be found so easy as so hard matter would suffer, and, for the most part, more easy than some other phrase which should with greater looseness and smoother sliding away deceive your understanding. I confess, indeed, it is not finely and pleasantly written, nor carrieth with it such delightful grace of speech as some great wise men have bestowed upon some foolisher things, yet it containeth sound truth set forth with faithful plainness, without wrong done to the author's meaning ; and so, if you accept and use it, you shall not fail to have great profit thereby, and I shall think my labour very well employed.

THOMAS NORTON.

INSTITUTIONS  
OF  
THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.





# PREFATORY ADDRESS.

TO

HIS MOST CHRISTIAN MAJESTY,

THE MOST MIGHTY AND ILLUSTRIOUS MONARCH,

FRANCIS, KING OF THE FRENCH,

HIS SOVEREIGN ;<sup>1</sup>

JOHN CALVIN PRAYS PEACE AND SALVATION IN CHRIST.<sup>2</sup>

SIRE,—When I first engaged in this work, nothing was farther from my thoughts than to write what should afterwards be presented to your Majesty. My intention was only to furnish a kind of rudiments, by which those who feel some interest in religion might be trained to true godliness. And I toiled at the task chiefly for the sake of my countrymen the French, multitudes of whom I perceived to be hungering and thirsting after Christ, while very few seemed to have been duly imbued with even a slender knowledge of him. That this was the object which I had in view is apparent from the work itself, which is written in a simple and elementary form adapted for instruction.

But when I perceived that the fury of certain bad men had risen to such a height in your realm, that there was no place in it for sound doctrine, I thought it might be of service if I were in the same work both to give instruction to

<sup>1</sup> In the last edition by Calvin, the words are, as here translated, simply, "Principi suo." In the edition published at Basle in 1536, the words are, "Principi ac Domino suo sibi observando."

<sup>2</sup> Ed. 1536. "In Domino."

my countrymen, and also lay before your Majesty a Confession, from which you may learn what the doctrine is that so inflames the rage of those madmen who are this day, with fire and sword, troubling your kingdom. For I fear not to declare, that what I have here given may be regarded as a summary of the very doctrine which, they vociferate, ought to be punished with confiscation, exile, imprisonment, and flames, as well as exterminated by land and sea.

I am aware, indeed, how, in order to render our cause as hateful to your Majesty as possible, they have filled your ears and mind with atrocious insinuations; but you will be pleased, of your clemency, to reflect, that neither in word nor deed could there be any innocence, were it sufficient merely to accuse. When any one, with the view of exciting prejudice, observes that this doctrine, of which I am endeavouring to give your Majesty an account, has been condemned by the suffrages of all the estates, and was long ago stabbed again and again by partial sentences of courts of law, he undoubtedly says nothing more than that it has sometimes been violently oppressed by the power and faction of adversaries, and sometimes fraudulently and insidiously overwhelmed by lies, cavils, and calumny. While a cause is unheard, it is violence to pass sanguinary sentences against it; it is fraud to charge it, contrary to its deserts, with sedition and mischief.

That no one may suppose we are unjust in thus complaining, you yourself, most illustrious Sovereign, can bear us witness with what lying calumnies it is daily traduced in your presence, as aiming at nothing else than to wrest the sceptres of kings out of their hands, to overturn all tribunals and seats of justice, to subvert all order and government, to disturb the peace and quiet of society, to abolish all laws, destroy the distinctions of rank and property, and, in short, turn all things upside down. And yet, that which you hear is but the smallest portion of what is said: for among the common people are disseminated certain horrible insinuations—insinuations which, if well founded, would justify the whole world in condemning the doctrine with its authors to a thousand fires and gibbets. Who can wonder that the

popular hatred is inflamed against it, when credit is given to those most iniquitous accusations? See, why all ranks unite with one accord in condemning our persons and our doctrine!

Carried away by this feeling, those who sit in judgment merely give utterance to the prejudices which they have imbibed at home, and think they have duly performed their part if they do not order punishment to be inflicted on any one until convicted, either on his own confession, or on legal evidence. But of what crime convicted? "Of that condemned doctrine," is the answer. But with what justice condemned? The very essence of the defence was, not to abjure the doctrine itself, but to maintain its truth. On this subject, however, not a whisper is allowed!

Justice, then, most invincible Sovereign, entitles me to demand that you will undertake a thorough investigation of this cause, which has hitherto been tossed about in any kind of way, and handled in the most irregular manner, without any order of law, and with passionate heat rather than judicial gravity.

Let it not be imagined that I am here framing my own private defence, with the view of obtaining a safe return to my native land. Though I cherish towards it the feelings which become me as a man, still, as matters now are, I can be absent from it without regret. The cause which I plead is the common cause of all the godly, and therefore the very cause of Christ—a cause which, throughout your realm, now lies, as it were, in despair, torn and trampled upon in all kinds of ways, and that more through the tyranny of certain Pharisees than any sanction from yourself. But it matters not to inquire how the thing is done; the fact that it is done cannot be denied. For so far have the wicked prevailed, that the truth of Christ, if not utterly routed and dispersed, lurks as if it were ignobly buried; while the poor Church, either wasted by cruel slaughter or driven into exile, or intimidated and terror-struck, scarcely ventures to breathe. Still her enemies press on with their wonted rage and fury over the ruins which they have made, strenuously assaulting the wall, which is already giving way. Meanwhile, no man comes forth to offer his protection



against such furies. Any who would be thought most favourable to the truth, merely talk of pardoning the error and imprudence of ignorant men. For so those modest personages<sup>1</sup> speak; giving the name of *error and imprudence* to that which they know to be<sup>2</sup> the infallible truth of God, and of *ignorant men* to those whose intellect they see that Christ has not despised, seeing he has deigned to entrust them with the mysteries of his heavenly wisdom.<sup>3</sup> Thus all are ashamed of the Gospel.

Your duty, most serene Prince, is, not to shut either your ears or mind against a cause involving such mighty interests as these: how the glory of God is to be maintained on the earth inviolate, how the truth of God is to preserve its dignity, how the kingdom of Christ is to continue amongst us compact and secure. The cause is worthy of your ear, worthy of your investigation, worthy of your throne.

The characteristic of a true sovereign is, to acknowledge that, in the administration of his kingdom, he is a minister of God. He who does not make his reign subservient to the divine glory, acts the part not of a king, but a robber. He, moreover, deceives himself who anticipates long prosperity to any kingdom which is not ruled by the sceptre of God, that is, by his divine word. For the heavenly oracle is infallible which has declared, that "where there is no vision the people perish," (Prov. xxix. 18.)

Let not a contemptuous idea of our insignificance dissuade you from the investigation of this cause. We, indeed, are perfectly conscious how poor and abject we are: in the presence of God we are miserable sinners, and in the sight of men most despised—we are (if you will) the mere dregs and off-scourings of the world, or worse, if worse can be named: so that before God there remains nothing of which we can glory save only his mercy, by which, without any merit of our own, we are admitted to the hope of eternal salvation:<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Modesti homines," not in Ed. 1536.

<sup>2</sup> "Quam norunt," not in Ed. 1536.

<sup>3</sup> The words, "Quorum ingenium non adeo despicabile Christi fuisse vident," not in Ed. 1536.

<sup>4</sup> The words stand thus in the Ed. 1536: "Qua salvi nullo nostro merito facti sumus."



and before men not even this much remains,<sup>1</sup> since we can glory only in our infirmity, a thing which, in the estimation of men, it is the greatest ignominy even tacitly<sup>2</sup> to confess. But our doctrine must stand sublime above all the glory of the world, and invincible by all its power, because it is not ours, but that of the living God and his Anointed, whom the Father has appointed King, that he may rule from sea to sea, and from the rivers even to the ends of the earth; and so rule as to smite the whole earth and its strength of iron and brass, its splendour of gold and silver, with the mere rod of his mouth, and break them in pieces like a potter's vessel; according to the magnificent predictions of the prophets respecting his kingdom, (Dan. ii. 34; Isaiah xi. 4; Psalm ii. 9.)

Our adversaries, indeed, clamorously maintain that our appeal to the word of God is a mere pretext,—that we are, in fact, its worst corrupters. How far this is not only malicious calumny, but also shameless effrontery, you will be able to decide, of your own knowledge, by reading our Confession. Here, however, it may be necessary to make some observations which may dispose, or at least assist, you to read and study it with attention.

When Paul declared that all prophecy ought to be according to the analogy of faith, (Rom. xii. 6,) he laid down the surest rule for determining the meaning of Scripture. Let our doctrine be tested by this rule and our victory is secure. For what accords better and more aptly with faith than to acknowledge ourselves divested of all virtue that we may be clothed by God, devoid of all goodness that we may be filled by Him, the slaves of sin that he may give us freedom, blind that he may enlighten, lame that he may cure, and feeble that he may sustain us; to strip ourselves of all ground of glorying that he alone may shine forth glorious, and we be glorified in Him? When these things, and others to the same effect, are said by us, they interpose, and querulously complain, that in this way we overturn some blind light of nature, fancied preparatives, free will,

<sup>1</sup> "Non ita multum," not in Ed. 1536.

<sup>2</sup> "Cum nutu," not in Ed. 1536.

and works meritorious of eternal salvation, with their own supererogations also;<sup>1</sup> because they cannot bear that the entire praise and glory of all goodness, virtue, justice, and wisdom, should remain with God. But we read not of any having been blamed for drinking too much of the fountain of living water; on the contrary, those are severely reprimanded who “have hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water,” (Jer. ii. 13.) Again, what more agreeable to faith than to feel assured that God is a propitious Father when Christ is acknowledged as a brother and propitiator? than confidently to expect all prosperity and gladness from Him, whose ineffable love towards us was such that He “spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all”? (Rom. viii. 32,) than to rest in the sure hope of salvation and eternal life whenever Christ, in whom such treasures are hid, is conceived to have been given by the Father? Here they attack us, and loudly maintain, that this sure confidence is not free from arrogance and presumption. But as nothing is to be presumed of ourselves, so all things are to be presumed of God; nor are we stript of vain-glory for any other reason than that we may learn to glory in the Lord. Why go farther? Take but a cursory view, most valiant King, of all the parts of our cause, and count us of all wicked men the most iniquitous, if you do not discover plainly, that “therefore we both labour and suffer reproach because we trust in the living God,” (1 Tim. iv. 10;) because we believe it to be “life eternal” to know “the only true God, and Jesus Christ,” whom he has sent, (John xvii. 3.) For this hope some of us are in bonds, some beaten with rods, some made a gazing-stock, some proscribed, some most cruelly tortured, some obliged to flee; we are all pressed with straits, loaded with dire execrations, lacerated by slanders, and treated with the greatest indignity.

Look now to our adversaries, (I mean the priesthood, at whose beck and pleasure others ply their enmity against us,) and consider with me for a little by what zeal they are

<sup>1</sup> The only word in the Ed. 1536 after “free will,” is “merita.”

actuated. The true religion which is delivered in the Scriptures, and which all ought to hold, they readily permit both themselves and others to be ignorant of, to neglect and despise; and they deem it of little moment what each man believes concerning God and Christ, or disbelieves, provided he submits to the judgment of the Church with what they call<sup>1</sup> implicit faith; nor are they greatly concerned though they should see the glory of God dishonoured by open blasphemies, provided not a finger is raised against the primacy of the Apostolic See and the authority of holy mother Church.<sup>2</sup> Why, then, do they war for the mass, purgatory, pilgrimage, and similar follies, with such fierceness and acerbity, that though they cannot prove one of them from the word of God, they deny godliness can be safe without faith in these things—faith drawn out, if I may so express it, to its utmost stretch? Why? just because their belly is their God, and their kitchen their religion; and they believe, that if these were away they would not only not be Christians, but not even men. For although some wallow in luxury, and others feed on slender crusts, still they all live by the same pot, which without that fuel might not only cool, but altogether freeze. He, accordingly, who is most anxious about his stomach, proves the fiercest champion of his faith. In short, the object on which all to a man are bent, is to keep their kingdom safe or their belly filled; not one gives even the smallest sign of sincere zeal.

Nevertheless, they cease not to assail our doctrine, and to accuse and defame it in what terms they may, in order to render it either hated or suspected. They call it new, and of recent birth; they carp at it as doubtful and uncertain; they bid us tell by what miracles it has been confirmed; they ask if it be fair to receive it against the consent of so many holy Fathers and the most ancient custom; they urge us to confess either that it is schismatical in giving battle to the Church, or that the Church must have been without life during the many centuries in which nothing of the kind

<sup>1</sup> "Ut aiunt," not in Ed. 1536.

<sup>2</sup> No part of this sentence from "provided" is in the Ed. 1536.



was heard. Lastly, they say there is little need of argument, for its quality may be known by its fruits, namely, the large number of sects, the many seditious disturbances, and the great licentiousness which it has produced. No doubt, it is a very easy matter for them, in presence of an ignorant and credulous multitude, to insult over an undefended cause; but were an opportunity of mutual discussion afforded, that acrimony which they now pour out upon us in frothy torrents, with as much license as impunity,<sup>1</sup> would assuredly boil dry.

1. First, in calling it new, they are exceedingly injurious to God, whose sacred word deserved not to be charged with novelty. To them, indeed, I very little doubt it is new, as Christ is new, and the Gospel new; but those who are acquainted with the old saying of Paul, that Christ Jesus "died for our sins, and rose again for our justification," (Rom. iv. 25,) will not detect any novelty in us. That it long lay buried and unknown is the guilty consequence of man's impiety; but now when, by the kindness of God, it is restored to us, it ought to resume its antiquity just as the returning citizen resumes his rights.

2. It is owing to the same ignorance that they hold it to be doubtful and uncertain; for this is the very thing of which the Lord complains by his prophet, "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider," (Isaiah i. 3.) But however they may sport with its uncertainty, had they to seal their own doctrine with their blood, and at the expense of life, it would be seen what value they put upon it. Very different is our confidence—a confidence which is not appalled by the terrors of death, and therefore not even by the judgment-seat of God.

3. In demanding miracles from us, they act dishonestly; for we have not coined some new gospel, but retain the very one the truth of which is confirmed by all the miracles which Christ and the apostles ever wrought. But they have a peculiarity which we have not—they can con-

<sup>1</sup> "Tam licenter quam impune," not in Ed. 1536.



firm their faith by constant miracles down to the present day! Nay rather, they allege miracles which might produce wavering in minds otherwise well disposed; they are so frivolous and ridiculous, so vain and false. But were they even exceedingly wonderful, they could have no effect against the truth of God, whose name ought to be hallowed always, and everywhere, whether by miracles, or by the natural course of events. The deception would perhaps be more specious if Scripture did not admonish us of the legitimate end and use of miracles. Mark tells us (Mark xvi. 20) that the signs which followed the preaching of the apostles were wrought in confirmation of it; so Luke also relates that the Lord "gave testimony to the word of his grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done" by the hands of the apostles, (Acts xiv. 3.) Very much to the same effect are those words of the apostle, that salvation by a preached gospel was confirmed, "the Lord bearing witness with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles," (Heb. ii. 4.) Those things which we are told are seals of the gospel, shall we pervert to the subversion of the gospel? what was destined only to confirm the truth, shall we misapply to the confirmation of lies? The proper course, therefore, is, in the first instance, to ascertain and examine the doctrine which is said by the Evangelist to precede; then after it has been proved, but not till then, it may receive confirmation from miracles. But the mark of sound doctrine given by our Saviour himself is its tendency to promote the glory not of men, but of God, (John vii. 18; + viii. 50.) Our Saviour having declared this to be the test of doctrine, we are in error if we regard as miraculous, works which are used for any other purpose than to magnify the name of God.<sup>1</sup> And it becomes us to remember that Satan has his miracles, which, although they are tricks rather than true wonders, are still such as to delude the ignorant and unwary. Magicians and enchanters have always been famous for miracles, and miracles of an astonish-

<sup>1</sup> No part of the passage, beginning above, "The deception," &c., is in Ed. 1536.

ing description have given support to idolatry: these, however, do not make us converts to the superstitions either of magicians or idolaters. In old times, too, the Donatists used their power of working miracles as a battering-ram, with which they shook the simplicity of the common people. We now give to our opponents the answer which Augustine then gave to the Donatists, (in Joan. Tract. 23,) "The Lord put us on our guard against those wonder-workers when he foretold that false prophets would arise, who, by lying signs and divers wonders, would, if it were possible, deceive the very elect," (Matth. xxiv. 24.) Paul, too, gave warning that the reign of antichrist would be "with all power, and signs, and lying wonders," (2 Thess. ii. 9.)

But our opponents tell us that their miracles are wrought not by idols, not by sorcerers, not by false prophets, but by saints: as if we did not know it to be one of Satan's wiles to transform himself "into an angel of light," (2 Cor. xi. 14.) The Egyptians, in whose neighbourhood Jeremiah was buried, anciently sacrificed and paid other divine honours to him, (Hieron. in Præf. Jerem.) Did they not make an idolatrous abuse of the holy prophet of God? and yet, in recompense for so venerating his tomb, they thought<sup>1</sup> that they were cured of the bite of serpents. What, then, shall we say but that it has been, and always will be, a most just punishment of God, to send on those who do not receive the truth in the love of it, "strong delusion, that they should believe a lie"? (2 Thess. ii. 11.) We, then, have no lack of miracles, sure miracles, that cannot be gain-sayed; but those to which our opponents lay claim are mere delusions of Satan, in as much as they draw off the people from the true worship of God to vanity.

4. It is a calumny to represent us as opposed to the Fathers, (I mean the ancient writers of a purer age,) as if the Fathers were supporters of their impiety. Were the contest to be decided by such authority, (to speak in the most moderate terms,) the better part of the victory would

<sup>1</sup> Instead of "thought they were cured," the Ed. 1536 says simply, "they were cured," (curarentur.)

be ours.<sup>1</sup> While there is much that is admirable and wise in the writings of those Fathers, and while in some things it has fared with them as with ordinary men; these pious sons, forsooth, with the peculiar acuteness of intellect, and judgment, and soul, which belongs to them, adore only their slips and errors, while those things which are well said they either overlook, or disguise, or corrupt, so that it may be truly said their only care has been to gather dross among gold. Then, with dishonest clamour, they assail us as enemies and despisers of the Fathers. So far are we from despising them, that if this were the proper place, it would give us no trouble to support the greater part of the doctrines which we now hold by their suffrages. Still, in studying their writings, we have endeavoured to remember, (1 Cor. iii. 21-23; see also Augustin. Ep. 28,) that all things are ours, to serve, not lord it over us, but that we are Christ's only, and must obey him in all things without exception. He who does not draw this distinction will not have any fixed principles in religion: for those holy men were ignorant of many things, are often opposed to each other, and are sometimes at variance with themselves.

It is not without cause (remark our opponents) we are thus warned by Solomon, "Remove not the ancient landmarks which thy fathers have set," (Prov. xxii. 28.) But the same rule applies not to the measuring of fields and the obedience of faith. The rule applicable to the latter is, "Forget also thine own people, and thy father's house," (Ps. xlv. 10.) But if they are so fond of allegory, why do they not understand the apostles, rather than any other class of Fathers, to be meant by those whose landmarks it is unlawful to remove? This is the interpretation of Jerome, whose words they have quoted in their canons. But as regards those to whom they apply the passage, if they wish the landmarks to be fixed, why do they, whenever it suits their purpose, so freely overleap them?

Among the Fathers there were two, the one of whom said,<sup>2</sup> "Our God neither eats nor drinks, and therefore has

<sup>1</sup> "Ut modestissime etiam loquar," not in the Ed. 1536.

<sup>2</sup> i. Acatius in lib. xi. cap. 16, F. Triport. Hist.



no need of chalices and salvers;" and the other,<sup>1</sup> "Sacred rites do not require gold, and things which are not bought with gold, please not by gold." They step beyond the boundary, therefore, when in sacred matters they are so much delighted with gold, silver, ivory, marble, gems, and silks, that unless everything is overlaid with costly show, or rather insane luxury,<sup>2</sup> they think God is not duly worshipped.

It was a Father who said,<sup>3</sup> "He ate flesh freely on the day on which others abstained from it, because he was a Christian." They overleap the boundaries, therefore, when they doom to perdition every soul that, during Lent, shall have tasted flesh.

There were two Fathers, the one of whom said,<sup>4</sup> "A monk not labouring with his own hands is no better than a violent man and a robber;" and the other,<sup>5</sup> "Monks, however assiduous they may be in study, meditation, and prayer, must not live by others." This boundary, too, they transgressed, when they placed lazy gormandising monks in dens and stews, to gorge themselves on other men's substance.

It was a Father who said,<sup>6</sup> "It is a horrid abomination to see in Christian temples a painted image either of Christ or of any saint." Nor was this pronounced by the voice of a single individual; but an Ecclesiastical Council also decreed,<sup>7</sup> "Let nought that is worshipped be depicted on walls."<sup>8</sup> Very far are they from keeping within these boundaries when they leave not a corner without images.

Another Father counselled,<sup>9</sup> "That after performing the office of humanity to the dead in their burial, we should leave them at rest." These limits they burst through when they keep up a perpetual anxiety about the dead.

It is a Father who testifies,<sup>10</sup> "That the substance of bread

<sup>1</sup> ii. Ambr. lib. ii. De Officiis, cap. 28.

<sup>2</sup> Instead of the words here translated, viz. "exquisito splendore vel potius insano luxu," the Ed. 1536 has only the word "luxu."

<sup>3</sup> iii. Spiridion. Trip. Hist. lib. i. cap. 10.

<sup>4</sup> iv. Trip. Hist. lib. viii. cap. 1.

<sup>5</sup> v. August. De Opere Monach. cap. 7.

<sup>6</sup> vi. Epiph. Epist. ab Hieron. versa.

<sup>7</sup> vii. Conc. Elibert. can. 36.

<sup>8</sup> No part of this sentence is in Ed. 1536.

<sup>9</sup> viii. Ambr. de Abraha. lib. i. c. 7.

<sup>10</sup> ix. Gelasius Papa in Conc. Rom.



and wine in the Eucharist does not cease but remains, just as the nature and substance of man remains united to the Godhead in the Lord Jesus Christ." This boundary they pass in pretending that, as soon as the words of our Lord are pronounced, the substance of bread and wine ceases, and is transubstantiated into body and blood.

They were Fathers, who, as they exhibited only one Eucharist to the whole Church,<sup>1</sup> and kept back from it the profane and flagitious; so they, in the severest terms, censured all those<sup>2</sup> who, being present, did not communicate. How far have they removed these landmarks, in filling not churches only, but also private houses, with their masses, admitting all and sundry to be present, each the more willingly the more largely he pays, however wicked and impure he may be,—not inviting any one to faith in Christ and faithful communion in the sacraments, but rather vending their own work for the grace and merits of Christ!<sup>3</sup>

There were two Fathers, the one of whom decided that those were to be excluded altogether from partaking of Christ's sacred supper,<sup>4</sup> who, contented with communion in one kind, abstained from the other; while the other Father strongly contends<sup>5</sup> that the blood of the Lord ought not to be denied to the Christian people, who, in confessing him, are enjoined to shed their own blood. These landmarks, also, they removed, when, by an unalterable law, they ordered the very thing which the former Father punished with excommunication, and the latter condemned for a valid reason.

It was a Father who pronounced it rashness,<sup>6</sup> in an obscure question, to decide in either way without clear and

<sup>1</sup> x. Chrys. in 1. cap. Ephes.

<sup>2</sup> xi. Calixt. Papa, De Consecrat. dist. 2.

<sup>3</sup> Instead of the whole passage, beginning at bottom of p. 14, "It is a Father who testifies," &c. the Ed. 1536 has the following sentence:—"Ex patribus erat qui negavit in sacramento cœnæ esse verum corpus sed mysterium duntaxat corporis; sic enim ad verbum loquitur." On the margin reference is made to the author of an unfinished Tract on Matthew, forming the 11th Homil. among the works of Chrysostom.

<sup>4</sup> xii. Gelas. can. Comperimus, De Consec. dist. 2.

<sup>5</sup> xiii. Cypr. Epist. 2, lib. i. De Lapsis.

<sup>6</sup> xiv. August. lib. ii. De Peccat. Mer. cap. ult.

evident authority from Scripture. They forgot this landmark when they enacted so many constitutions, so many canons, and so many dogmatical decisions, without sanction from the word of God.

It was a Father who reproved Montanus, among other heresies,<sup>1</sup> for being the first who imposed laws of fasting. They have gone far beyond this landmark also in enjoining fasting under the strictest laws.

It was a Father who denied<sup>2</sup> that the ministers of the Church should be interdicted from marrying, and pronounced married life to be a state of chastity; and there were other Fathers who assented to his decision. These boundaries they overstepped in rigidly binding their priests to celibacy.

It was a Father who thought<sup>3</sup> that Christ only should be listened to, from its being said, "hear him;" and that regard is due not to what others before us have said or done, but only to what Christ, the head of all, has commanded. This landmark they neither observe themselves nor allow to be observed by others, while they subject themselves and others to any master whatever, rather than Christ.

There is a Father who contends<sup>4</sup> that the Church ought not to prefer herself to Christ, who always judges truly, whereas ecclesiastical judges, who are but men, are generally deceived. Having burst through this barrier also, they hesitate not to suspend the whole authority of Scripture on the judgment of the Church.<sup>5</sup>

All the Fathers with one heart execrated, and with one mouth protested<sup>6</sup> against, contaminating the word of God with the subtleties of sophists, and involving it in the brawls of dialecticians. Do they keep within these limits when the sole occupation of their lives is to entwine and entangle the simplicity of Scripture with endless disputes, and worse

<sup>1</sup> xv. Apollon. De quo Eccles. Hist. lib. v. cap. 12.

<sup>2</sup> xvi. Paphnut. Tripart. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 14.

<sup>3</sup> xvii. Cypr. Epist. 2, lib. ii.

<sup>4</sup> xviii. Aug. cap. 2, Cont. Cresconium Grammat.

<sup>5</sup> No part of this passage is in Ed. 1536.

<sup>6</sup> xix. Calv. De Scholast. Doctor. Judicium. Vid. Book II. cap. ii. sec. 6; Book III. cap. iv. sec. 1, 2, 7, 13, 14, 26-29; Book III. cap. xi. sec. 14, 15; Book IV. cap. xviii. sec. 1; and cap. xix. sec. 10, 11, 22, 23.

than sophistical jargon ? So much so, that were the Fathers to rise from their graves, and listen to the brawling art which bears the name of speculative theology, there is nothing they would suppose it less to be than a discussion of a religious nature.

But my discourse would far exceed its just limits were I to show, in detail, how petulantly those men shake off the yoke of the Fathers, while they wish to be thought their most obedient sons. Months, nay, years would fail me ; and yet, so deplorable and desperate is their effrontery, that they presume to chastise us for overstepping the ancient landmarks !

5. Then, again, it is to no purpose they call us to the bar of custom. To make every thing yield to custom would be to do the greatest injustice. Were the judgments of mankind correct, custom would be regulated by the good. But it is often far otherwise in point of fact ; for, whatever the many are seen to do, forthwith obtains the force of custom. But human affairs have scarcely ever been so happily constituted as that the better course pleased the greater number. Hence the private vices of the multitude have generally resulted in public error, or rather that common consent in vice which these worthy men would have to be law. Any one with eyes may perceive that it is not one flood of evils which has deluged us ; that many fatal plagues have invaded the globe ; that all things rush headlong ; so that either the affairs of men must be altogether despaired of, or we must not only resist, but boldly attack prevailing evils. The cure is prevented by no other cause than the length of time during which we have been accustomed to the disease. But be it so that public error must have a place in human society, still, in the kingdom of God, we must look and listen only to his eternal truth, against which no series of years, no custom, no conspiracy, can plead prescription. Thus Isaiah formerly taught the people of God, “ Say ye not, A confederacy, to all to whom this people shall say, A confederacy ;” *i. e.* do not unite with the people in an impious consent ; “ neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid. Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself ; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread,” (Is. viii. 12.) Now, therefore, let them,



if they will, object to us both past ages and present examples; if we sanctify the Lord of hosts, we shall not be greatly afraid. Though many ages should have consented to like ungodliness, He is strong who taketh vengeance to the third and fourth generation; or the whole world should league together in the same iniquity, He taught experimentally what the end is of those who sin with the multitude, when He destroyed the whole human race with a flood, saving Noah with his little family, who, by putting his faith in Him alone, "condemned the world," (Heb. xi. 7.) In short, depraved custom is just a kind of general pestilence in which men perish not the less that they fall in a crowd. It were well, moreover, to ponder the observation of Cyprian,<sup>1</sup> that those who sin in ignorance, though they cannot be entirely exculpated, seem, however, to be, in some sense, excusable; whereas those who obstinately reject the truth, when presented to them by the kindness of God, have no defence to offer.<sup>2</sup>

6. Their dilemma does not push us so violently as to oblige us to confess, either that the Church was a considerable time without life, or that we have now a quarrel with the Church. The Church of Christ assuredly has lived, and will live, as long as Christ shall reign at the right hand of the Father. By his hand it is sustained, by his protection defended, by his mighty power preserved in safety. For what he once undertook he will undoubtedly perform, he will be with his people always, "even to the end of the world," (Matth. xxviii. 20.) With the Church we wage no war, since, with one consent, in common with the whole body of the faithful, we worship and adore one God, and Christ Jesus the Lord, as all the pious have always adored him. But they themselves err not a little from the truth in not recognising any church but that which they behold with the bodily eye, and in endeavouring to circumscribe it by limits, within which it cannot be confined.

The hinges on which the controversy turns are these: first, in their contending that the form of the Church is

<sup>1</sup> Epist. 3, lib. ii. ; et in Epist. ad Julian. De Hæret. Baptiz.

<sup>2</sup> No part of this sentence is in Ed. 1536.



always visible and apparent ; and, secondly, in their placing this form in the see of the Church of Rome and its hierarchy. We, on the contrary, maintain, both that the Church may exist without any apparent form, and, moreover, that the form is not ascertained by that external splendour which they foolishly admire, but by a very different mark, namely, by the pure preaching of the word of God, and the due administration of the sacraments. They make an outcry whenever the Church cannot be pointed to with the finger. But how oft was it the fate of the Church among the Jews to be so defaced that no comeliness appeared? What do we suppose to have been the splendid form when Elijah complained that he was left alone? (1 Kings xix. 14.) How long after the advent of Christ did it lie hid without form? How often since has it been so oppressed by wars, seditions, and heresies, that it was nowhere seen in splendour? Had they lived at that time, would they have believed there was any Church? But Elijah learned that there remained seven thousand men who had not bowed the knee to Baal; nor ought we to doubt that Christ has always reigned on earth ever since he ascended to heaven. Had the faithful at that time required some discernible form, must they not have forthwith given way to despondency? And, indeed, Hilary accounted it a very great fault in his day, that men were so possessed with a foolish admiration of Episcopal dignity as not to perceive the deadly hydra lurking under that mask. His words are, (Cont. Auxentium,) “ One advice I give: Beware of Antichrist; for, unhappily, a love of walls has seized you; unhappily, the Church of God which you venerate exists in houses and buildings; unhappily, under these you find the name of peace. Is it doubtful that in these Antichrist will have his seat? Safer to me are mountains, and woods, and lakes, and dungeons, and whirlpools; since in these prophets, dwelling or immersed, did prophesy.”

And what is it at the present day that the world venerates in its horned bishops, unless that it imagines those who are seen presiding over celebrated cities to be holy prelates of religion? Away, then, with this absurd mode

of judging !<sup>1</sup> Let us rather reverently admit, that as God alone knows who are his, so he may sometimes withdraw the external manifestation of his Church from the view of men. This, I allow, is a fearful punishment which God sends on the earth ; but if the wickedness of men so deserves, why do we strive to oppose the just vengeance of God ?<sup>2</sup> It was thus that God, in past ages, punished the ingratitude of men : for after they had refused to obey his truth, and had extinguished his light, he allowed them, when blinded by sense, both to be deluded by lying vanities and plunged in thick darkness, so that no face of a true Church appeared. Meanwhile, however, though his own people were dispersed and concealed amidst errors and darkness, he saved them from destruction. No wonder ; for he knew how to preserve them even in the confusion of Babylon and the flame of the fiery furnace.

But as to the wish that the form of the Church should be ascertained by some kind of vain pomp, how perilous it is I will briefly indicate, rather than explain, that I may not exceed all bounds. What they say is, that the Pontiff,<sup>3</sup> who holds the apostolic see, and the priests who are anointed and consecrated by him,<sup>4</sup> provided they have the insignia of fillets and mitres, represent the Church, and ought to be considered as in the place of the Church, and therefore cannot err. Why so ? because they are pastors of the Church, and consecrated to the Lord. And were not Aaron and other prefects of Israel pastors ? But Aaron and his sons, though already set apart to the priesthood, erred notwithstanding when they made the calf, (Exod. xxxii. 4.) Why, according to this view, should not the four hundred prophets who lied to Ahab represent the Church ? (1 Kings xxii. 11, &c.) The Church, however, stood on the side of Micaiah. He was alone, indeed, and despised, but from his mouth the truth proceeded. Did not the prophets also exhibit both the name and face of the Church, when, with one

<sup>1</sup> No part of the passage beginning above is in the Ed. 1536.

<sup>2</sup> In the last Ed., "*justæ Dei ultionis*;" in Ed. 1536, "*divinæ justitiæ*."

<sup>3</sup> "*Papa Romanus*," in the Ed. 1536.

<sup>4</sup> Instead of the words, "*qui ab eo instites inuncti et consecrati, infulis modo et lituis insigniti sunt*," the Ed. 1536 has only "*episcopi alii*."

accord, they rose up against Jeremiah, and with menaces boasted of it as a thing impossible that the law should perish from the priest, or counsel from the wise, or the word from the prophet? (Jer. xviii. 18.) In opposition to the whole body of the prophets, Jeremiah is sent alone to declare from the Lord, (Jer. iv. 9,) that a time would come when the law would perish from the priest, counsel from the wise, and the word from the prophet. Was not like splendour displayed in that council when the chief priests, scribes, and Pharisees, assembled to consult how they might put Jesus to death? Let them go, then, and cling to the external mask, while they make Christ and all the prophets of God schismatics, and, on the other hand, make Satan's ministers the organs of the Holy Spirit!

But if they are sincere, let them answer me in good faith,—in what place, and among whom, do they think the Church resided, after the Council of Basle degraded and deposed Eugenius from the popedom, and substituted Amadeus in his place? Do their utmost, they cannot deny that that Council was legitimate as far as regards external forms, and was summoned not only by one Pontiff, but by two. Eugenius, with the whole herd of cardinals and bishops who had joined him in plotting the dissolution of the Council, was there condemned of contumacy, rebellion, and schism. Afterwards, however, aided by the favour of princes, he got back his popedom safe. The election of Amadeus, duly made by the authority of a general holy synod, went to smoke; only he himself was appeased with a cardinal's cap, like a piece of offal thrown to a barking dog. Out of the lap of these rebellious and contumacious schismatics proceeded all future popes, cardinals, bishops, abbots, and presbyters. Here they are caught, and cannot escape. For, on which party will they bestow the name of Church? Will they deny it to have been a general Council, though it lacked nothing as regards external majesty, having been solemnly called by two bulls, consecrated by the legate of the Roman See as its president, constituted regularly in all respects, and continuing in possession of all its honours to the last? Will they admit that Eugenius, and his whole train,



through whom they have all been consecrated, were schismatical? Let them, then, either define the form of the Church differently, or, however numerous they are, we will hold them all to be schismatics in having knowingly and willingly received ordination from heretics. But had it never been discovered before that the Church is not tied to external pomp, we are furnished with a lengthened proof in their own conduct, in proudly vending themselves to the world under the specious title of Church, notwithstanding that they are the deadly pests of the Church. I speak not of their manners and of those tragical atrocities with which their whole life teems, since it is said that they are Pharisees who should be heard, not imitated. By devoting some portion of your leisure to our writings, you will see not obscurely, that their doctrine—the very doctrine to which they say it is owing that they are the Church—is a deadly murderer of souls, the firebrand, ruin, and destruction of the Church.

7. Lastly, they are far from candid when they invidiously number up the disturbances, tumults, and disputes, which the preaching of our doctrine has brought in its train, and the fruits which, in many instances, it now produces: for the doctrine itself is undeservedly charged with evils which ought to be ascribed to the malice of Satan. It is one of the characteristics of the divine word, that whenever it appears, Satan ceases to slumber and sleep. This is the surest and most unerring test for distinguishing it from false doctrines which readily betray themselves, while they are received by all with willing ears, and welcomed by an applauding world. Accordingly, for several ages, during which all things were immersed in profound darkness, almost all mankind<sup>1</sup> were mere jest and sport to the god of this world, who, like any Sardanapalus, idled and luxuriated undisturbed. For what else could he do but laugh and sport while in tranquil and undisputed possession of his kingdom? But when light beaming from above somewhat dissipated the darkness—when the strong man arose and aimed a blow at his kingdom—then, indeed, he began to shake off his wonted torpor, and rush to

<sup>1</sup> For “*cuncti fere mortales*,” the Ed. 1536 has only “*homines*.”



arms. And first he stirred up the hands of men, that by them he might violently suppress the dawning truth; but when this availed him not, he turned to snares, exciting dissensions and disputes about doctrine by means of his Catabaptists, and other portentous miscreants, that he might thus obscure, and, at length, extinguish the truth. And now he persists in assailing it with both engines, endeavouring to pluck up the true seed by the violent hand of man, and striving, as much as in him lies, to choke it with his tares, that it may not grow and bear fruit. But it will be in vain, if we listen to the admonition of the Lord, who long ago disclosed his wiles, that we might not be taken unawares, and armed us with full protection against all his machinations. But how malignant to throw upon the word of God itself the blame either of the seditions which wicked men and rebels, or of the sects which impostors stir up against it! The example, however, is not new. Elijah was interrogated whether it were not he that troubled Israel. Christ was seditious, according to the Jews; and the apostles were charged with the crime of popular commotion. What else do those who, in the present day, impute to us all the disturbances, tumults, and contentions which break out against us? Elijah, however, has taught us our answer, (1 Kings xviii. 17, 18.) It is not we who disseminate errors or stir up tumults, but they who resist the mighty power of God.

But while this single answer is sufficient to rebut the rash charges of these men, it is necessary, on the other hand, to consult for the weakness of those who take the alarm at such scandals, and not unfrequently waver in perplexity. But that they may not fall away in this perplexity, and forfeit their good degree, let them know that the apostles in their day experienced the very things which now befall us. There were then unlearned and unstable men who, as Peter tells us, (2 Pet. iii. 16,) wrested the inspired writings of Paul to their own destruction. There were despisers of God, who, when they heard that sin abounded in order that grace might more abound, immediately inferred, "We will continue in sin that grace may abound," (Rom. vi. 1;)—when they heard that believers were not under the law, but

under grace, forthwith sung out, "We will sin because we are not under the law, but under grace," (Rom. vi. 15.) There were some who charged the apostle with being the minister of sin. Many false prophets entered in privily to pull down the churches which he had reared. Some preached the gospel through envy and strife, not sincerely,—(Phil. i. 15,)—maliciously even,—thinking to add affliction to his bonds. Elsewhere the gospel made little progress. All sought their own, not the things which were Jesus Christ's. Others went back like the dog to his vomit, or the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire. Great numbers perverted their spiritual freedom to carnal licentiousness. False brethren crept in to the imminent danger of the faithful. Among the brethren themselves various quarrels arose. What, then, were the apostles to do? Were they either to dissemble for the time, or rather lay aside and abandon that gospel which they saw to be the seed-bed of so many strifes, the source of so many perils, the occasion of so many scandals? In straits of this kind, they remembered that "Christ was a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence," "set up for the fall and rising again of many," and "for a sign to be spoken against," (Luke ii. 34;) and, armed with this assurance, they proceeded boldly through all perils from tumults and scandals. It becomes us to be supported by the same consideration, since Paul declares that it is a never-failing characteristic of the gospel to be a "savour of death unto death in them that perish," (2 Cor. ii. 16,) although rather destined to us for the purpose of being a savour of life unto life, and the power of God for the salvation of believers. This we should certainly experience it to be, did we not by our ingratitude corrupt this unspeakable gift of God, and turn to our destruction what ought to be our only saving defence.<sup>1</sup>

But to return, Sire.<sup>2</sup> Be not moved by the absurd insinuations with which our adversaries are striving to frighten you

<sup>1</sup> Instead of the concluding part of the sentence beginning "though rather," &c., and stopping at the reference, the Ed. 1536 simply continues the quotation, "*odor vitæ in vitam iis qui salvi sunt.*"

<sup>2</sup> Instead of "Rex" simply, the Ed. 1536 has "*magnanime Rex.*"

into the belief that nothing else is wished and aimed at by this new gospel, (for so they term it,) than opportunity for sedition and impunity for all kinds of vice. Our God<sup>1</sup> is not the author of division, but of peace; and the Son of God, who came to destroy the works of the devil, is not the minister of sin. We, too, are undeservedly charged with desires of a kind for which we have never given even the smallest suspicion. We, forsooth, meditate the subversion of kingdoms; we, whose voice was never heard in faction, and whose life, while passed under you, is known to have been always quiet and simple; even now, when exiled from our home, we nevertheless cease not to pray for all prosperity to your person and your kingdom. We, forsooth, are aiming after an unchecked indulgence in vice, in whose manners, though there is much to be blamed, there is nothing which deserves such an imputation; nor (thank God) have we profited so little in the Gospel that our life may not be to these slanderers an example of chastity, kindness, pity, temperance, patience, moderation, or any other virtue. It is plain, indeed, that we fear God sincerely, and worship him in truth, since, whether by life or by death, we desire his name to be hallowed; and hatred herself has been forced to bear testimony to the innocence and civil integrity of some of our people on whom death was inflicted for the very thing which deserved the highest praise. But if any, under pretext of the Gospel, excite tumults, (none such have as yet been detected in your realm,) if any use the liberty of the grace of God as a cloak for licentiousness, (I know of numbers who do,) there are laws and legal punishments by which they may be punished up to the measure of their deserts,—only, in the meantime, let not the Gospel of God be evil spoken of because of the iniquities of evil men.

Sire,<sup>2</sup> That you may not lend too credulous an ear to the accusations of our enemies, their virulent injustice has been set before you at sufficient length; I fear even more than sufficient, since this preface has grown almost to the bulk of

<sup>1</sup> Instead of "Deus noster," the Ed. 1536 has only "Deus."

<sup>2</sup> In Ed. 1536, "Rex magnificentissime."

a full apology. My object, however, was not to frame a defence, but only with a view to the hearing of our cause, to mollify your mind, now indeed turned away and estranged from us—I add, even inflamed against us—but whose good will, we are confident, we should regain, would you but once, with calmness and composure, read this our Confession, which we desire your Majesty to accept instead of a defence. But if the whispers of the malevolent so possess your ear, that the accused are to have no opportunity of pleading their cause; if those vindictive furies, with your connivance, are always to rage with bonds, scourgings, tortures, maimings, and burnings, we, indeed, like sheep doomed to slaughter, shall be reduced to every extremity; yet so that, in our patience, we will possess our souls, and wait for the strong hand of the Lord, which, doubtless, will appear in its own time, and show itself armed, both to rescue the poor from affliction, and also take vengeance on the despisers, who are now exulting so securely.<sup>1</sup>

Most illustrious King, may the Lord, the King of kings, establish your throne in righteousness, and your sceptre in equity.

BASLE, 1st August 1536.

<sup>1</sup> The words, “qui tanta securitate nunc exsultant,” not in Ed. 1536.



## THE EPISTLE TO THE READER.

[PREFIXED TO THE SECOND EDITION, PUBLISHED AT STRASBURG IN 1539.]

IN the First Edition of this work, having no expectation of the success which God has, in his goodness, been pleased to give it, I had, for the greater part, performed my office perfunctorily, as is usual in trivial undertakings. But when I perceived that almost all the godly had received it with a favour which I had never dared to wish, far less to hope for, being sincerely conscious that I had received much more than I deserved, I thought I should be very ungrateful if I did not endeavour, at least according to my humble ability, to respond to the great kindness which had been expressed towards me, and which spontaneously urged me to diligence. I therefore ask no other favour from the studious for my new work than that which they have already bestowed upon me beyond my merits. I feel so much obliged, that I shall be satisfied if I am thought not to have made a bad return for the gratitude I owe. This return I would have made much earlier, had not the Lord, for almost two whole years, exercised me in an extraordinary manner. But it is soon enough if well enough. I shall think it has appeared in good season when I perceive that it produces some fruit to the Church of God. I may add, that my object in this work was to prepare and train students of theology for the study of the Sacred Volume, so that they might both have an easy introduction to it, and be able to proceed in it, with unfaltering step, seeing I have endeavoured to give such a summary of religion in all its parts, and have digested it into

such an order as may make it not difficult for any one, who is rightly acquainted with it, to ascertain both what he ought principally to look for in Scripture, and also to what head he ought to refer whatever is contained in it. Having thus, as it were, paved the way, I shall not feel it necessary, in any Commentaries on Scripture which I may afterwards publish, to enter into long discussions of doctrine, or dilate on common places, and will, therefore, always compress them. In this way the pious reader will be saved much trouble and weariness, provided he comes furnished with a knowledge of the present work as an essential prerequisite. As my Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans will give a specimen of this plan, I would much rather let it speak for itself than declare it in words. Farewell, dear reader, and if you derive any fruit from my labours, give me the benefit of your prayers to the Lord.

STRASBURG, 1st August 1539.

## SUBJECT OF THE PRESENT WORK.

[PREFIXED TO THE FRENCH EDITION, PUBLISHED AT GENEVA IN 1545.]

IN order that my Readers may be the better able to profit by the present work, I am desirous briefly to point out the advantage which they may derive from it. For by so doing I will show them the end at which they ought to aim, and to which they ought to give their attention in reading it.

Although the Holy Scriptures contain a perfect doctrine, to which nothing can be added—our Lord having been pleased therein to unfold the infinite treasures of his wisdom—still every person, not intimately acquainted with them, stands in need of some guidance and direction, as to what he ought to look for in them, that he may not wander up and down, but pursue a certain path, and so attain the end to which the Holy Spirit invites him.

Hence it is the duty of those who have received from God more light than others to assist the simple in this matter, and, as it were, lend them their hand to guide and assist them in finding the sum of what God has been pleased to teach us in his word. Now, this cannot be better done in writing than by treating in succession of the principal matters which are comprised in Christian philosophy. For he who understands these will be prepared to make more progress in the school of God in one day than any other person in three months, inasmuch as he, in a great measure, knows to what he should refer each sentence, and has a rule by which to test whatever is presented to him.

Seeing, then, how necessary it was in this manner to aid those who desire to be instructed in the doctrine of salvation, I have endeavoured, according to the ability which God has given me, to employ myself in so doing, and with this view have composed the present book. And first I wrote it in Latin, that it might be serviceable to all studious persons, of what nation soever they might be; afterwards, desiring to communicate any fruit which might be in it to my French countrymen, I translated it into our own tongue. I dare not bear too strong a testimony in its favour, and declare how profitable the reading of it will be, lest I should seem to prize my own work too highly. However, I may promise this much, that it will be a kind of key opening up to all the children of God a right and ready access to the understanding of the sacred volume. Wherefore, should our Lord give me henceforth means and opportunity of composing some Commentaries, I will use the greatest possible brevity, as there will be no occasion to make long digressions, seeing that I have in a manner deduced at length all the articles which pertain to Christianity.

And since we are bound to acknowledge that all truth and sound doctrine proceed from God, I will venture boldly to declare what I think of this work, acknowledging it to be God's work rather than mine. To him, indeed, the praise due to it must be ascribed. My opinion of the work then is this: I exhort all, who reverence the word of the Lord, to read it, and diligently imprint it on their memory, if they would, in the first place, have a summary of Christian doctrine, and, in the second place, an introduction to the profitable reading both of the Old and New Testament. When they shall have done so, they will know by experience that I have not wished to impose upon them with words. Should any one be unable to comprehend all that is contained in it, he must not, however, give it up in despair; but continue always to read on, hoping that one passage will give him a more familiar exposition of another. Above all things, I would recommend that recourse be had to Scripture in considering the proofs which I adduce from it.



## EPISTLE TO THE READER.

[PREFIXED TO THE LAST EDITION, REVISED BY THE AUTHOR.]

IN the First Edition of this work, having not the least expectation of the success which God, in his boundless goodness, has been pleased to give it, I had, for the greater part, performed my task in a perfunctory manner, (as is usual in trivial undertakings;) but when I understood that it had been received, by almost all the pious, with a favour which I had never dared to ask, far less to hope for, the more I was sincerely conscious that the reception was beyond my deserts, the greater I thought my ingratitude would be, if, to the very kind wishes which had been expressed towards me, and which seemed of their own accord to invite me to diligence, I did not endeavour to respond, at least according to my humble ability. This I attempted not only in the Second Edition, but in every subsequent one the work has received some improvement. But though I do not regret the labour previously expended, I never felt satisfied until the work was arranged in the order in which it now appears. Now I trust it will approve itself to the judgment of all my readers. As a clear proof of the diligence with which I have laboured to perform this service to the Church of God, I may be permitted to mention, that last winter, when I thought I was dying of quartan ague, the more the disorder increased, the less I spared myself, in order that I might leave this book behind me, and thus make some return to the pious for their kind urgency. I could have wished to give it sooner, but it is soon enough if good enough. I shall think it has appeared

in good time when I see it more productive of benefit than formerly to the Church of God. This is my only wish.

And truly it would fare ill with me if, not contented with the approbation of God alone, I were unable to despise the foolish and perverse censures of ignorant, as well as the malicious and unjust censures of ungodly men. For although, by the blessing of God, my most ardent desire has been to advance his kingdom, and promote the public good,—although I feel perfectly conscious, and take God and his angels to witness, that ever since I began to discharge the office of teacher in the Church, my only object has been to do good to the Church, by maintaining the pure doctrine of godliness, yet I believe there never was a man more assailed, stung, and torn by calumny—[as well by the declared enemies of the truth of God, as by many worthless persons who have crept into his Church—as well by monks who have brought forth their frocks from their cloisters to spread infection wherever they come, as by other miscreants not better than they.<sup>1</sup>] After this letter to the reader was in the press, I had undoubted information that, at Augsburg, where the Imperial Diet was held, a rumour of my defection to the papacy was circulated, and entertained in the courts of the princes more readily than might have been expected.<sup>2</sup> This, forsooth, is the return made me by those who certainly are not unaware of numerous proofs of my constancy—proofs which, while they rebut the foul charge, ought to have defended me against it, with all humane and impartial judges. But the devil, with all his crew, is mistaken if he imagines, that, by assailing me with vile falsehoods, he can either cool my zeal, or diminish my

<sup>1</sup> The passage in brackets occurs only in the French original. The words are as follows: “Tant des ennemis manifestes de la vérité de Dieu, que de beaucoup de canailles qui se sont fourrez en son Eglise: tant des Moines qui ont apporté leurs frocs hors de leurs cloistres pour infecter le lieu où ils venoyent, que d’autres vilains qui ne valent pas mieux qu’eux.”

<sup>2</sup> The words in the French are, “Avec trop grande facilité; ce qui monstroît que beaucoup de meschans hypocrites, faisans profession de l’Evangile, eussent bien voulu qu’ainsi fust.” With too great facility; showing that many wicked hypocrites, making profession of the gospel, would have been very glad it had been so.

exertions. I trust that God, in his infinite goodness, will enable me to persevere with unruffled patience in the course of his holy vocation. Of this I give the pious reader a new proof in the present edition.

I may further observe, that my object in this work has been, so to prepare and train candidates for the sacred office, for the study of the sacred volume, that they may both have an easy introduction to it, and be able to prosecute it with unfaltering step ; for, if I mistake not, I have given a summary of religion in all its parts, and digested it in an order which will make it easy for any one, who rightly comprehends it, to ascertain both what he ought chiefly to look for in Scripture, and also to what head he ought to refer whatever is contained in it. Having thus, as it were, paved the way, as it will be unnecessary, in any Commentaries on Scripture which I may afterwards publish, to enter into long discussions of doctrinal points, and enlarge on commonplaces, I will compress them into narrow compass. In this way much trouble and fatigue will be spared to the pious reader, provided he comes prepared with a knowledge of the present work as an indispensable prerequisite. The system here followed being set forth as in a mirror in all my Commentaries, I think it better to let it speak for itself than to give any verbal explanation of it.

Farewell, kind reader : if you derive any benefit from my labours, aid me with your prayers to our heavenly Father.

GENEVA, 1st August 1559.

The zeal of those whose cause I undertook,  
Has swelled a short defence into a book.

“I profess to be one of those who, by profiting, write, and by writing profit.”—*Augustine*, Epist. vii.

## METHOD AND ARRANGEMENT, OR SUBJECT OF THE WHOLE WORK.

[FROM AN EPITOME OF THE INSTITUTIONS, BY GASPAR OLEVIAN.]

THE subject handled by the author of these Christian Institutes is twofold : the former, the knowledge of God, which leads to a blessed immortality ; and the latter, (which is subordinate to the former,) the knowledge of ourselves. With this view the author simply adopts the arrangement of the Apostles' Creed, as that with which all Christians are most familiar. For as the Creed consists of four parts, the first relating to God the Father, the second to the Son, the third to the Holy Spirit, and the fourth to the Church, so the author, in fulfilment of his task, divides his Institutes into four parts, corresponding to those of the Creed. Each of these parts it will now be proper to explain separately.

I. The first article of the Apostles' Creed is concerning *God the Father*, the creation, preservation, and government of the universe, as implied in his omnipotence. Accordingly, the First Book of the Institutes treats of the knowledge of God, considered as the Creator, Preserver, and Governor of the world, and of every thing contained in it. It shows both wherein the true knowledge of the Creator consists, and what the end of this knowledge is, chap. i. and ii. ; that it is not learned at school, but that every one is self-taught it from the womb, chap. iii. Such, however, is man's depravity, that he stifles and corrupts this knowledge, partly by ignorance, partly by wicked design ; and hence does not by means of it either glorify God as he ought, or attain to happiness,



chap. iv. This inward knowledge is aided from without, namely, by the creatures in which, as in a mirror, the perfections of God may be contemplated. But man does not properly avail himself of this assistance, and hence to those to whom God is pleased to make himself more intimately known for salvation, he communicates his written word. This leads to a consideration of the Holy Scriptures, in which God has revealed that not the Father only, but along with the Father, the Son, and Holy Spirit, is that Creator of heaven and earth, whom, in consequence of our innate depravity, we were unable, either from innate natural knowledge, or the beautiful mirror of the world, to know so as to glorify. Here the author treats of the manifestation of God in Scripture; and in connection with it, of the one divine essence in three persons. But, lest man should lay the blame of his voluntary blindness on God, the author shows in what state man was created at first, introducing dissertations on the image of God, free will, and original righteousness. The subject of Creation being thus disposed of, the preservation and government of the world is considered in the three last chapters, which contain a very full discussion of the doctrine of Divine Providence.

II. As man, by sinning, forfeited the privileges conferred on him at his creation, recourse must be had to Christ. Accordingly, the next article in the Creed is, *And in Jesus Christ his only Son, &c.* In like manner, the Second Book of the Institutes treats of the knowledge of God considered as a Redeemer in Christ, and, showing man his fall, conducts him to Christ the Mediator. Here the subject of original sin is considered, and it is shown that man has no means within himself, by which he can escape from guilt, and the impending curse: that, on the contrary, until he is reconciled and renewed, every thing that proceeds from him is of the nature of sin. This subject is considered as far as the vi. chapter. Man being thus utterly undone in himself, and incapable of working out his own cure by thinking a good thought, or doing what is acceptable to God, must seek redemption without himself, viz., in Christ. The end for which the Law was given, was not to secure worshippers for

itself, but to conduct them unto Christ. This leads to an exposition of the Moral Law. Christ was known to the Jews under the Law as the author of salvation, but is more fully revealed under the Gospel in which he was manifested to the world. Hence arises the doctrine concerning the similarity and difference of the two Testaments, the Old and the New, the Law and the Gospel. These topics occupy as far as the xii. chapter. It is next shown that, in order to secure a complete salvation, it was necessary that the eternal Son of God should become man, and assume a true human nature. It is also shown in what way these two natures constitute one person. In order to purchase a full salvation by his own merits, and effectually apply it, Christ was appointed to the offices of Prophet, Priest, and King. The mode in which Christ performs these offices is considered, and also whether in point of fact he did accomplish the work of redemption. Here an exposition is given of the articles relating to Christ's death, resurrection, and ascension into heaven. In conclusion, it is proved that Christ is rightly and properly said to have merited divine grace and salvation for us.

III. So long as Christ is separated from us we have no benefit from him. We must be ingrafted in him like branches in the vine. Hence the Creed, after treating of Christ, proceeds in its third article, *I believe in the Holy Spirit*,—the Holy Spirit being the bond of union between us and Christ. In like manner, the Third Book of the Institutes treats of the Holy Spirit which unites us to Christ, and, in connection with it, of faith, by which we embrace Christ with a double benefit, viz., that of gratuitous righteousness, which he imputes to us, and regeneration, which he begins in us by giving us repentance. In order to show the worthlessness of a faith which is not accompanied with a desire of repentance, the author, before proceeding to a full discussion of justification, treats at length from chapter iii.—x. of repentance, and the constant study of it—repentance, which Christ, when apprehended by faith, begets in us by his Spirit. Chapter xi. treats of the primary and peculiar benefit of Christ when united to us by the Holy Spirit, viz.,

justification. This subject is continued to the xx. chapter, which treats of prayer, the hand, as it were, to receive the blessings which faith knows to be treasured up for it with God, according to the word of promise. But, as the Holy Spirit, who creates and preserves our faith, does not unite all men to Christ, who is the sole author of salvation, chapter xxi. treats of the eternal election of God, to which it is owing that we, in whom he foresaw no good which he had not previously bestowed, are given to Christ, and united to him by the effectual calling of the Gospel. This subject is continued to the xxv. chapter, which treats of complete regeneration and felicity, namely, the final resurrection to which we must raise our eyes, seeing that, in regard to fruition, the happiness of the godly is only begun in this world.

IV. Since the Holy Spirit does not ingraft all men into Christ, or endue them with faith, and those whom he does so endue he does not ordinarily endue without means, but uses for that purpose the preaching of the Gospel and the dispensation of the Sacraments, together with the administration of all kinds of discipline, the Creed contains the following article, *I believe in the Holy Catholic Church*, namely, that Church which, when lying in eternal death, the Father, by gratuitous election, freely reconciled to himself in Christ, and endued with the Holy Spirit, that, being ingrafted into Christ, it might have communion with him as its proper head; whence flow perpetual remission of sins, and full restoration to eternal life. Accordingly, the Church is treated of in the first fourteen chapters of the Fourth Book, which thereafter treats of the means which the Holy Spirit employs in calling us effectually from spiritual death, and preserving the Church, in other words, Baptism and the Lord's Supper. These means are, as it were, the royal sceptre of Christ, by which, through the efficacy of his Spirit, he commences his spiritual reign in the Church, advances it from day to day, and after this life, without the use of means, finally perfects it. This subject is continued to the xx. chapter.

And because civil governments are, in this life, the hos-

pitiable entertainers (*hospitia*) of the Church, (though civil government is distinct from the spiritual kingdom of Christ,) the author shows how great blessings they are, blessings which the Church is bound gratefully to acknowledge, until we are called away from this tabernacle to the heavenly inheritance, where God will be all in all.

Such is the arrangement of the Institutes, which may be thus summed up: Man being at first created upright, but afterwards being not partially but totally ruined, finds his entire salvation out of himself in Christ, to whom being united by the Holy Spirit freely given without any foresight of future works, he thereby obtains a double blessing, viz., full imputation of righteousness, which goes along with us even to the grave, and the commencement of sanctification, which daily advances till at length it is perfected in the day of regeneration or resurrection of the body, and this, in order that the great mercy of God may be celebrated in the heavenly mansions, throughout eternity.



# GENERAL INDEX OF CHAPTERS.

## BOOK FIRST.

### OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD THE CREATOR.

#### *Eighteen Chapters.*

- I. Connection between the Knowledge of God and the Knowledge of Ourselves. Nature of the connection.
- II. What it is to Know God. Tendency of this Knowledge.
- III. The Human Mind naturally imbued with the Knowledge of God.
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- VI. The need of Scripture as a Guide and Teacher in coming to God as a Creator.
- VII. The Testimony of the Spirit necessary to give full authority to Scripture. The impiety of pretending that the Credibility of Scripture depends on the judgment of the Church.
- VIII. The Credibility of Scripture sufficiently proved, in so far as Natural Reason admits.
- IX. All the principles of piety subverted by fanatics, who substitute revelations for Scripture.
- X. In Scripture, the true God opposed, exclusively, to all the gods of the Heathen.

- XI. Impiety of attributing a visible form to God. The setting up of Idols a revolt against the True God.
- XII. God distinguished from Idols, that He may be the exclusive object of Worship.
- XIII. The Unity of the Divine Essence in Three Persons taught, in Scripture, from the foundation of the World.
- XIV. In the Creation of the World, and all things in it, the True God distinguished by certain marks from fictitious gods.
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AS FIRST MANIFESTED TO THE FATHERS UNDER THE LAW,  
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- XV. Three things chiefly to be regarded in Christ; viz., his Offices of Prophet, King, and Priest.
- XVI. How Christ performed the Office of Redeemer in procuring our salvation. The Death, Resurrection, and Ascension of Christ.
- XVII. Christ rightly and properly said to have merited Grace and Salvation for us.

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- XIII. Of Vows. The miserable entanglements caused by Vowing rashly.
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INSTITUTES  
OF  
THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

BOOK FIRST.  
OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD THE CREATOR.

## ARGUMENT.

THE First Book treats of the knowledge of God the Creator. But as it is in the creation of man that the divine perfections are best displayed, so man also is made the subject of discourse. Thus the whole book divides itself into two principal heads—the former relating to the knowledge of God, and the latter to the knowledge of man. In the first chapter, these are considered jointly; and in each of the following chapters, separately: occasionally, however, intermingled with other matters which refer to one or other of the heads; *e.g.*, the discussions concerning Scripture and images, falling under the former head, and the other three concerning the creation of the world, the holy angels and devils, falling under the latter. The last point discussed, *viz.*, the method of the divine government, relates to both.

With regard to the former head, *viz.*, the knowledge of God, it is shown, in the first place, what the kind of knowledge is which God requires, Chap. II. And, in the second place, (Chap. III.—IX.,) where this knowledge must be sought, namely, not in man; because, although naturally implanted in the human mind, it is stifled, partly by ignorance, partly by evil intent, Chap. III. and IV.; not in the frame of the world: because, although it shines most clearly there; we are so stupid that these manifestations, however perspicuous, pass away without any beneficial result, Chap. V.; but in Scripture, (Chap. VI.,) which is treated of, Chap. VII.—IX. In the third place, it is shown what the character of God is, Chap. X. In the fourth place, how impious it is to give a visible form to God, (here images, the worship of them, and its origin, are considered,) Chap. XI. In the fifth place, it is shown that God is to be solely and wholly worshipped, Chap. XII. Lastly, Chap. XIII. treats of the unity of the divine essence, and the distinction of three persons.

With regard to the latter head, *viz.*, the knowledge of man, first, Chap. XIV. treats of the creation of the world, and of good and bad angels, (these all having reference to man.) And then Chap. XV., taking up the subject of man himself, examines his nature and his powers.

The better to illustrate the nature both of God and man, the three remaining Chapters, *viz.*, XVI.—XVIII., proceed to treat of the general government of the world, and particularly of human actions, in opposition to fortune and fate, explaining both the doctrine and its use. In conclusion, it is shown, that though God employs the instrumentality of the wicked, he is pure from sin and from taint of every kind.



# INSTITUTES OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

## BOOK FIRST.

### OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD THE CREATOR.

#### CHAPTER I.

##### THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD AND OF OURSELVES MUTUALLY CONNECTED.—NATURE OF THE CONNECTION.

###### *Sections.*

1. The sum of true wisdom, viz., the knowledge of God and of ourselves. Effects of the latter.
2. Effects of the knowledge of God, in humbling our pride, unveiling our hypocrisy, demonstrating the absolute perfections of God, and our own utter helplessness.
3. Effects of the knowledge of God illustrated by the examples, 1. of holy patriarchs ; 2. of holy angels ; 3. of the sun and moon.

1. OUR wisdom, in so far as it ought to be deemed true and solid wisdom, consists almost entirely of two parts : the knowledge of God and of ourselves. But as these are connected together by many ties, it is not easy to determine which of the two precedes, and gives birth to the other. For, in the first place, no man can survey himself without forthwith turning his thoughts towards the God in whom he lives and moves ; because it is perfectly obvious, that the endowments which we possess cannot possibly be

from ourselves; nay, that our very being is nothing else than subsistence in God alone. In the second place, those blessings which unceasingly distil to us from heaven, are like streams conducting us to the fountain. Here, again, the infinitude of good which resides in God becomes more apparent from our poverty. In particular, the miserable ruin into which the revolt of the first man has plunged us, compels us to turn our eyes upwards; not only that while hungry and famishing we may thence ask what we want, but being aroused by fear may learn humility. For as there exists in man something like a world of misery, and ever since we were stript of the divine attire our naked shame discloses an immense series of disgraceful properties, every man, being stung by the consciousness of his own unhappiness, in this way necessarily obtains at least some knowledge of God. Thus, our feeling of ignorance, vanity, want, weakness, in short, depravity and corruption, reminds us, (see Calvin on John iv. 10,) that in the Lord, and none but He, dwell the true light of wisdom, solid virtue, exuberant goodness. We are accordingly urged by our own evil things to consider the good things of God; and, indeed, we cannot aspire to Him in earnest until we have begun to be displeased with ourselves. For what man is not disposed to rest in himself? Who, in fact, does not thus rest, so long as he is unknown to himself; that is, so long as he is contented with his own endowments, and unconscious or unmindful of his misery? Every person, therefore, on coming to the knowledge of himself, is not only urged to seek God, but is also led as by the hand to find him.

2. On the other hand, it is evident that man never attains to a true self-knowledge until he have previously contemplated the face of God, and come down after such contemplation to look into himself. For (such is our innate pride) we always seem to ourselves just, and upright, and wise, and holy, until we are convinced, by clear evidence, of our injustice, vileness, folly, and impurity. Convinced, however, we are not, if we look to ourselves only, and not to the Lord also—He being the only standard by the application of which this conviction can be produced. For, since we are all natu-

rally prone to hypocrisy, any empty semblance of righteousness is quite enough to satisfy us instead of righteousness itself. And since nothing appears within us or around us that is not tainted with very great impurity, so long as we keep our mind within the confines of human pollution, anything which is in some small degree less defiled delights us as if it were most pure : just as an eye, to which nothing but black had been previously presented, deems an object of a whitish, or even of a brownish hue, to be perfectly white. Nay, the bodily sense may furnish a still stronger illustration of the extent to which we are deluded in estimating the powers of the mind. If, at mid-day, we either look down to the ground, or on the surrounding objects which lie open to our view, we think ourselves endued with a very strong and piercing eyesight ; but when we look up to the sun, and gaze at it unveiled, the sight which did excellently well for the earth is instantly so dazzled and confounded by the refulgence, as to oblige us to confess that our acuteness in discerning terrestrial objects is mere dimness when applied to the sun. Thus, too, it happens in estimating our spiritual qualities. So long as we do not look beyond the earth, we are quite pleased with our own righteousness, wisdom, and virtue ; we address ourselves in the most flattering terms, and seem only less than demigods. But should we once begin to raise our thoughts to God, and reflect what kind of Being he is, and how absolute the perfection of that righteousness, and wisdom, and virtue, to which, as a standard, we are bound to be conformed, what formerly delighted us by its false show of righteousness will become polluted with the greatest iniquity ; what strangely imposed upon us under the name of wisdom will disgust by its extreme folly ; and what presented the appearance of virtuous energy will be condemned as the most miserable impotence. So far are those qualities in us, which seem most perfect, from corresponding to the divine purity.

3. Hence that dread and amazement with which, as Scripture uniformly relates, holy men were struck and overwhelmed whenever they beheld the presence of God. When

we see those who previously stood firm and secure so quaking with terror, that the fear of death takes hold of them, nay, they are, in a manner, swallowed up and annihilated, the inference to be drawn is, that men are never duly touched and impressed with a conviction of their insignificance, until they have contrasted themselves with the majesty of God. Frequent examples of this consternation occur both in the Book of Judges and the Prophetical Writings;<sup>1</sup> so much so, that it was a common expression among the people of God, "We shall die, for we have seen the Lord." Hence the Book of Job, also, in humbling men under a conviction of their folly, feebleness, and pollution, always derives its chief argument from descriptions of the Divine wisdom, virtue, and purity. Nor without cause: for we see Abraham the readier to acknowledge himself but dust and ashes the nearer he approaches to behold the glory of the Lord, and Elijah unable to wait with unveiled face for His approach; so dreadful is the sight. And what can man do, man who is but rottenness and a worm, when even the Cherubim themselves must veil their faces in very terror? To this, undoubtedly, the Prophet Isaiah refers, when he says, (Isaiah xxiv. 23,) "The moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of Hosts shall reign;" *i. e.*, when he shall exhibit his refulgence, and give a nearer view of it, the brightest objects will, in comparison, be covered with darkness.

But though the knowledge of God and the knowledge of ourselves are bound together by a mutual tie, due arrangement requires that we treat of the former in the first place, and then descend to the latter.

<sup>1</sup> Judges xiii. 22; Isaiah vi. 5; Ezek. i. 28, iii. 14; Job ix 4, &c.; Gen. xviii. 27; 1 Kings xix. 13.



## CHAPTER II.

WHAT IT IS TO KNOW GOD.—TENDENCY OF THIS  
KNOWLEDGE.*Sections.*

1. The knowledge of God the Creator defined. The substance of this knowledge, and the use to be made of it.
2. Further illustration of the use, together with a necessary reproof of vain curiosity, and refutation of the Epicureans. The character of God as it appears to the pious mind, contrasted with the absurd views of the Epicureans. Religion defined.

1. BY the knowledge of God, I understand that by which we not only conceive that there is some God, but also apprehend what it is for our interest, and conducive to his glory, what, in short, it is befitting to know concerning him. For, properly speaking, we cannot say that God is known where there is no religion or piety. I am not now referring to that species of knowledge by which men, in themselves lost and under curse, apprehend God as a Redeemer in Christ the Mediator. I speak only of that simple and primitive knowledge, to which the mere course of nature would have conducted us, had Adam stood upright. For although no man will now, in the present ruin of the human race, perceive God to be either a father, or the author of salvation, or propitious in any respect, until Christ interpose to make our peace; still it is one thing to perceive that God our Maker supports us by his power, rules us by his providence, fosters us by his goodness, and visits us with all kinds of blessings, and another thing to embrace the grace of reconciliation offered to us in Christ. Since, then, the Lord first appears, as well in the creation of the world as in the general doctrine of Scripture, simply as a Creator, and afterwards as a Redeemer in Christ,—a twofold knowledge of him hence arises: of these the former is now to be considered, the

latter will afterwards follow in its order. But although our mind cannot conceive of God, without rendering some worship to him, it will not, however, be sufficient simply to hold that he is the only being whom all ought to worship and adore, unless we are also persuaded that he is the fountain of all goodness, and that we must seek everything in him, and in none but him. My meaning is: we must be persuaded not only that as he once formed the world, so he sustains it by his boundless power, governs it by his wisdom, preserves it by his goodness, in particular, rules the human race with justice and judgment, bears with them in mercy, shields them by his protection; but also that not a particle of light, or wisdom, or justice, or power, or rectitude, or genuine truth, will anywhere be found, which does not flow from him, and of which he is not the cause; in this way we must learn to expect and ask all things from him, and thankfully ascribe to him whatever we receive. For this sense of the divine perfections is the proper master to teach us piety, out of which religion springs. By piety I mean that union of reverence and love to God which the knowledge of his benefits inspires. For, until men feel that they owe everything to God, that they are cherished by his paternal care, and that he is the author of all their blessings, so that nought is to be looked for away from him, they will never submit to him in voluntary obedience; nay, unless they place their entire happiness in him, they will never yield up their whole selves to him in truth and sincerity.

3.2. Those, therefore, who, in considering this question, propose to inquire what the essence of God is, only delude us with frigid speculations,—it being much more our interest to know what kind of being God is, and what things are agreeable to his nature. For, of what use is it to join Epicurus in acknowledging some God who has cast off the care of the world, and only delights himself in ease? What avails it, in short, to know a God with whom we have nothing to do? The effect of our knowledge rather ought to be, *first*, to teach us reverence and fear; and, *secondly*, to induce us, under its guidance and teaching, to ask every good thing from him, and, when it is received, ascribe it to him. For how can

the idea of God enter your mind without instantly giving rise to the thought, that since you are his workmanship, you are bound, by the very law of creation, to submit to his authority?—that your life is due to him?—that whatever you do ought to have reference to him? If so, it undoubtedly follows that your life is sadly corrupted, if it is not framed in obedience to him, since his will ought to be the law of our lives. On the other hand, your idea of his nature is not clear unless you acknowledge him to be the origin and fountain of all goodness. Hence would arise both confidence in him, and a desire of cleaving to him, did not the depravity of the human mind lead it away from the proper course of investigation.

For, first of all, the pious mind does not devise for itself any kind of God, but looks alone to the one true God; nor does it feign for him any character it pleases, but is contented to have him in the character in which he manifests himself, always guarding, with the utmost diligence, against transgressing his will, and wandering, with daring presumption, from the right path. He by whom God is thus known, perceiving how he governs all things, confides in him as his guardian and protector, and casts himself entirely upon his faithfulness,—perceiving him to be the source of every blessing, if he is in any strait or feels any want, he instantly recurs to his protection and trusts to his aid,—persuaded that he is good and merciful, he reclines upon him with sure confidence, and doubts not that, in the divine clemency, a remedy will be provided for his every time of need,—acknowledging him as his Father and his Lord, he considers himself bound to have respect to his authority in all things, to reverence his majesty, aim at the advancement of his glory, and obey his commands,—regarding him as a just judge, armed with severity to punish crimes, he keeps the judgment-seat always in his view. Standing in awe of it, he curbs himself, and fears to provoke his anger. Nevertheless, he is not so terrified by an apprehension of judgment as to wish he could withdraw himself, even if the means of escape lay before him; nay, he embraces him not less as the avenger of wickedness than as the rewarder of the right-

eous; because he perceives that it equally appertains to his glory to store up punishment for the one, and eternal life for the other. Besides, it is not the mere fear of punishment that restrains him from sin. Loving and revering God as his father, honouring and obeying him as his master, although there were no hell, he would revolt at the very idea of offending him.

Such is pure and genuine religion, namely, confidence in God coupled with serious fear—fear, which both includes in it willing reverence, and brings along with it such legitimate worship as is prescribed by the law. And it ought to be more carefully considered, that all men promiscuously do homage to God, but very few truly reverence him. On all hands there is abundance of ostentatious ceremonies, but sincerity of heart is rare.



## CHAPTER III.

THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD NATURALLY IMPLANTED IN THE  
HUMAN MIND.*Sections.*

1. The knowledge of God being manifested to all makes the reprobate without excuse. Universal belief and acknowledgment of the existence of God.
2. Objection—that religion and the belief of a Deity are the inventions of crafty politicians. Refutation of the objection. This universal belief confirmed by the examples of wicked men and Atheists.
3. Confirmed also by the vain endeavours of the wicked to banish all fear of God from their minds. Conclusion, that the knowledge of God is naturally implanted in the human mind.

1. THAT there exists in the human mind, and indeed by natural instinct, some sense of Deity, we hold to be beyond dispute, since God himself, to prevent any man from pretending ignorance, has endued all men with some idea of his Godhead, the memory of which he constantly renews and occasionally enlarges, that all to a man being aware that there is a God, and that he is their Maker, may be condemned by their own conscience when they neither worship him nor consecrate their lives to his service. Certainly, if there is any quarter where it may be supposed that God is unknown, the most likely for such an instance to exist is among the dullest tribes farthest removed from civilization. But, as a heathen tells us,<sup>1</sup> there is no nation so barbarous, no race so brutish, as not to be imbued with the conviction that there is a God. Even those who, in

<sup>1</sup> “Intelligi necesse est deos, quoniam insitas eorum vel potius innatas cognitiones habemus.—Quæ nobis natura informationem deorum ipsorum dedit, eadem inculpsit in mentibus ut eos æternos et beatos haberemus.”—Cic. de Nat. Deor. lib. i. c. 17.—“Itaque inter omnes omnium gentium summa constat; omnibus enim innatum est, et in animo quasi insculptum esse deos.”—Lib. ii. c. 4. See also Lact. Inst. Div. lib. iii. c. 10.

other respects, seem to differ least from the lower animals, constantly retain some sense of religion; so thoroughly has this common conviction possessed the mind, so firmly is it stamped on the breasts of all men. Since, then, there never has been, from the very first, any quarter of the globe, any city, any household even, without religion, this amounts to a tacit confession, that a sense of Deity is inscribed on every heart. Nay, even idolatry is ample evidence of this fact. For we know how reluctant man is to lower himself, in order to set other creatures above him. Therefore, when he chooses to worship wood and stone rather than be thought to have no God, it is evident how very strong this impression of a Deity must be; since it is more difficult to obliterate it from the mind of man, than to break down the feelings of his nature,—these certainly being broken down, when, in opposition to his natural haughtiness, he spontaneously humbles himself before the meanest object as an act of reverence to God.

2. It is most absurd, therefore, to maintain, as some do, that religion was devised by the cunning and craft of a few individuals, as a means of keeping the body of the people in due subjection, while there was nothing which those very individuals, while teaching others to worship God, less believed than the existence of a God. I readily acknowledge, that designing men have introduced a vast number of fictions into religion, with the view of inspiring the populace with reverence or striking them with terror, and thereby rendering them more obsequious; but they never could have succeeded in this, had the minds of men not been previously imbued with that uniform belief in God, from which, as from its seed, the religious propensity springs. And it is altogether incredible that those who, in the matter of religion, cunningly imposed on their ruder neighbours, were altogether devoid of a knowledge of God. For though in old times there were some, and in the present day not a few are found<sup>1</sup> who deny the being of a God, yet, whether they will or not, they occasionally feel the truth which they are desirous not to know. We do not read of any man who broke out into

<sup>1</sup> As to some Atheists of the author's time, see Calvinus De Scandalis.

more unbridled and audacious contempt of the Deity than C. Caligula,<sup>1</sup> and yet none showed greater dread when any indication of divine wrath was manifested. Thus, however unwilling, he shook with terror before the God whom he professedly studied to contemn. You may every day see the same thing happening to his modern imitators. The most audacious despiser of God is most easily disturbed, trembling at the sound of a falling leaf. How so, unless in vindication of the divine majesty, which smites their consciences the more strongly the more they endeavour to flee from it. They all, indeed, look out for hiding-places where they may conceal themselves from the presence of the Lord, and again efface it from their mind; but after all their efforts they remain caught within the net. Though the conviction may occasionally seem to vanish for a moment, it immediately returns, and rushes in with new impetuosity, so that any interval of relief from the gnawings of conscience is not unlike the slumber of the intoxicated or the insane, who have no quiet rest in sleep, but are continually haunted with dire horrific dreams. Even the wicked themselves, therefore, are an example of the fact that some idea of God always exists in every human mind.

3. All men of sound judgment will therefore hold, that a sense of Deity is indelibly engraven on the human heart. And that this belief is naturally engendered in all, and thoroughly fixed as it were in our very bones, is strikingly attested by the contumacy of the wicked, who, though they struggle furiously, are unable to extricate themselves from the fear of God. Though Diagoras,<sup>2</sup> and others of like stamp, make themselves merry with whatever has been believed in all ages concerning religion, and Dionysius scoffs at the judgment of heaven, it is but a Sardonian grin; for the worm of conscience, keener than burning steel, is gnawing them within. I do not say with Cicero, that errors wear out by age, and that religion increases and grows better day by day. For the world (as will be shortly seen) labours as much as it can to shake off all knowledge of God, and cor-

<sup>1</sup> Suet. Calig. c. 51.

<sup>2</sup> Cic. De Nat. Deor. lib. i. c. 23. Valer. Max. lib. i. c. 1.

rupts his worship in innumerable ways. I only say, that, when the stupid hardness of heart, which the wicked eagerly court as a means of despising God, becomes enfeebled, the sense of Deity, which of all things they wished most to be extinguished, is still in vigour, and now and then breaks forth. Whence we infer, that this is not a doctrine which is first learned at school, but one as to which every man is, from the womb, his own master; one which nature herself allows no individual to forget, though many, with all their might, strive to do so. Moreover, if all are born and live for the express purpose of learning to know God, and if the knowledge of God, in so far as it fails to produce this effect, is fleeting and vain, it is clear that all those who do not direct the whole thoughts and actions of their lives to this end fail to fulfil the law of their being. This did not escape the observation even of philosophers. For it is the very thing which Plato meant (in *Phæd. et Theæt.*) when he taught, as he often does, that the chief good of the soul consists in resemblance to God; *i.e.*, when, by means of knowing him, she is wholly transformed into him. Thus Gryllus, also, in Plutarch, (*lib. quod bruta anim. ratione utantur*,) reasons most skilfully, when he affirms that, if once religion is banished from the lives of men, they not only in no respect excel, but are, in many respects, much more wretched than the brutes, since, being exposed to so many forms of evil, they continually drag on a troubled and restless existence: that the only thing, therefore, which makes them superior is the worship of God, through which alone they aspire to immortality.



## CHAPTER IV.

THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD STIFLED OR CORRUPTED,  
IGNORANTLY OR MALICIOUSLY.*Sections.*

1. The knowledge of God suppressed by ignorance, many falling away into superstition. Such persons, however, inexcusable, because their error is accompanied with pride and stubbornness.
2. Stubbornness the companion of impiety.
3. No pretext can justify superstition. This proved, first, from reason ; and, secondly, from Scripture.
4. The wicked never willingly come into the presence of God. Hence their hypocrisy. Hence, too, their sense of Deity leads to no good result.

1. BUT though experience testifies that a seed of religion is divinely sown in all, scarcely one in a hundred is found who cherishes it in his heart, and not one in whom it grows to maturity, so far is it from yielding fruit in its season. Moreover, while some lose themselves in superstitious observances, and others, of set purpose, wickedly revolt from God, the result is, that, in regard to the true knowledge of him, all are so degenerate, that in no part of the world can genuine godliness be found. In saying that some fall away into superstition, I mean not to insinuate that their excessive absurdity frees them from guilt ; for the blindness under which they labour is almost invariably accompanied with vain pride and stubbornness. Mingled vanity and pride appear in this, that when miserable men do seek after God, instead of ascending higher than themselves as they ought to do, they measure him by their own carnal stupidity, and neglecting solid inquiry, fly off to indulge their curiosity in vain speculation. Hence, they do not conceive of him in the character in which he is manifested, but imagine him to be whatever their own rashness has de-

vised. This abyss standing open, they cannot move one footstep without rushing headlong to destruction. With such an idea of God, nothing which they may attempt to offer in the way of worship or obedience can have any value in his sight, because it is not him they worship, but, instead of him, the dream and figment of their own heart. This corrupt procedure is admirably described by Paul, when he says, that "thinking to be wise, they became fools," (Rom. i. 22.) He had previously said that "they became vain in their imaginations," but lest any should suppose them blameless, he afterwards adds, that they were deservedly blinded, because, not contented with sober inquiry, because, arrogating to themselves more than they have any title to do, they of their own accord court darkness, nay, bewitch themselves with perverse, empty show. Hence it is that their folly, the result not only of vain curiosity, but of licentious desire and overweening confidence in the pursuit of forbidden knowledge, cannot be excused.

2. The expression of David, (Psalm xiv. 1, liii. 1,) "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God," is primarily applied to those who, as will shortly farther appear, stifle the light of nature, and intentionally stupify themselves. We see many, after they have become hardened in a daring course of sin, madly banishing all remembrance of God, though spontaneously suggested to them from within, by natural sense. To show how detestable this madness is, the Psalmist introduces them as distinctly denying that there is a God, because, although they do not disown his essence, they rob him of his justice and providence, and represent him as sitting idly in heaven. Nothing being less accordant with the nature of God than to cast off the government of the world, leaving it to chance, and so to wink at the crimes of men that they may wanton with impunity in evil courses; it follows, that every man who indulges in security, after extinguishing all fear of divine judgment, virtually denies that there is a God. As a just punishment of the wicked, after they have closed their own eyes, God makes their hearts dull and heavy, and hence, seeing, they see not. David, indeed, is the best interpreter of his own meaning, when he says

elsewhere, the wicked has "no fear of God before his eyes," (Psalm xxxvi. 1;) and, again, "He hath said in his heart, God hath forgotten; he hideth his face; he will never see it." Thus, although they are forced to acknowledge that there is some God, they, however, rob him of his glory by denying his power. For, as Paul declares, "If we believe not, he abideth faithful, he cannot deny himself," (2 Tim. ii. 13;) so those who feign to themselves a dead and dumb idol, are truly said to deny God. It is, moreover, to be observed, that though they struggle with their own convictions, and would fain not only banish God from their minds, but from heaven also, their stupefaction is never so complete as to secure them from being occasionally dragged before the divine tribunal. Still, as no fear restrains them from rushing violently in the face of God, so long as they are hurried on by that blind impulse, it cannot be denied that their prevailing state of mind in regard to him is brutish oblivion.

3. In this way, the vain pretext which many employ to clothe their superstition is overthrown. They deem it enough that they have some kind of zeal for religion, how preposterous soever it may be, not observing that true religion must be conformable to the will of God as its unerring standard; that he can never deny himself, and is no spectre or phantom, to be metamorphosed at each individual's caprice. It is easy to see how superstition, with its false glosses, mocks God, while it tries to please him. Usually fastening merely on things on which he has declared he sets no value, it either contemptuously overlooks, or even undisguisedly rejects, the things which he expressly enjoins, or in which we are assured that he takes pleasure. Those, therefore, who set up a fictitious worship, merely worship and adore their own delirious fancies; indeed, they would never dare so to trifle with God, had they not previously fashioned him after their own childish conceits. Hence that vague and wandering opinion of Deity is declared by an apostle to be ignorance of God: "Howbeit, then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods." And he elsewhere declares, that the Ephe-



sians were "without God" (Eph. ii. 12) at the time when they wandered without any correct knowledge of him. It makes little difference, at least in this respect, whether you hold the existence of one God, or a plurality of gods, since, in both cases alike, by departing from the true God, you have nothing left but an execrable idol. It remains, therefore, to conclude with Lactantius, (*Instit. Div. lib. i. 2, 6,*) "No religion is genuine that is not in accordance with truth."

4. To this fault they add a second, viz., that when they do think of God it is against their will; never approaching him without being dragged into his presence, and when there, instead of the voluntary fear flowing from reverence of the divine majesty, feeling only that forced and servile fear which divine judgment extorts—judgment which, from the impossibility of escape, they are compelled to dread, but which, while they dread, they at the same time also hate. To impiety, and to it alone, the saying of Statius properly applies: "Fear first brought gods into the world," (*Theb. lib. i.*) Those whose inclinations are at variance with the justice of God, knowing that his tribunal has been erected for the punishment of transgression, earnestly wish that that tribunal were overthrown. Under the influence of this feeling they are actually warring against God, justice being one of his essential attributes. Perceiving that they are always within reach of his power, that resistance and evasion are alike impossible, they fear and tremble. Accordingly, to avoid the appearance of contemning a majesty by which all are overawed, they have recourse to some species of religious observance, never ceasing meanwhile to defile themselves with every kind of vice, and add crime to crime, until they have broken the holy law of the Lord in every one of its requirements, and set his whole righteousness at nought; at all events, they are not so restrained by their semblance of fear as not to luxuriate and take pleasure in iniquity, choosing rather to indulge their carnal propensities than to curb them with the bridle of the Holy Spirit. But since this shadow of religion (it scarcely even deserves to be called a shadow) is false and vain, it is easy to infer how much this



confused knowledge of God differs from that piety which is instilled into the breasts of believers, and from which alone true religion springs. And yet hypocrites would fain, by means of tortuous windings, make a show of being near to God at the very time they are fleeing from him. For while the whole life ought to be one perpetual course of obedience, they rebel without fear in almost all their actions, and seek to appease him with a few paltry sacrifices ; while they ought to serve him with integrity of heart and holiness of life, they endeavour to procure his favour by means of frivolous devices and punctilios of no value. Nay, they take greater license in their grovelling indulgences, because they imagine that they can fulfil their duty to him by preposterous expiations ; in short, while their confidence ought to have been fixed upon him, they put him aside, and rest in themselves or the creatures. At length they bewilder themselves in such a maze of error, that the darkness of ignorance obscures, and ultimately extinguishes, those sparks which were designed to show them the glory of God. Still, however, the conviction that there is some Deity continues to exist, like a plant which can never be completely eradicated, though so corrupt, that it is only capable of producing the worst of fruit. Nay, we have still stronger evidence of the proposition for which I now contend, viz., that a sense of Deity is naturally engraven on the human heart, in the fact, that the very reprobate are forced to acknowledge it. When at their ease, they can jest about God, and talk pertly and loquaciously in disparagement of his power ; but should despair, from any cause, overtake them, it will stimulate them to seek him, and dictate ejaculatory prayers, proving that they were not entirely ignorant of God, but had perversely suppressed feelings which ought to have been earlier manifested.

## CHAPTER V.

THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD CONSPICUOUS IN THE CREATION,  
AND CONTINUAL GOVERNMENT OF THE WORLD.

This chapter consists of two parts : 1. The former, which occupies the first ten sections, divides all the works of God into two great classes, and elucidates the knowledge of God as displayed in each class. The one class is treated of in the first six, and the other in the four following sections : 2. The latter part of the chapter shows, that, in consequence of the extreme stupidity of men, those manifestations of God, however perspicuous, lead to no useful result. This latter part, which commences at the eleventh section, is continued to the end of the chapter.

*Sections.*

1. The invisible and incomprehensible essence of God, to a certain extent, made visible in his works.
2. This declared by the first class of works, viz., the admirable motions of the heavens and the earth, the symmetry of the human body, and the connection of its parts ; in short, the various objects which are presented to every eye.
3. This more especially manifested in the structure of the human body.
4. The shameful ingratitude of disregarding God, who, in such a variety of ways, is manifested within us. The still more shameful ingratitude of contemplating the endowments of the soul, without ascending to Him who gave them. No objection can be founded on any supposed organism in the soul.
5. The powers and actions of the soul, a proof of its separate existence from the body. Proofs of the soul's immortality. Objection that the whole world is quickened by one soul. Reply to the objection. Its impiety.
6. Conclusion from what has been said, viz., that the omnipotence, eternity, and goodness of God, may be learned from the first class of works, *i. e.*, those which are in accordance with the ordinary course of nature.
7. The second class of works, viz., those above the ordinary course of nature, afford clear evidence of the perfections of God, especially his goodness, justice, and mercy.
8. Also his providence, power, and wisdom.
9. Proofs and illustrations of the divine Majesty. The use of them, viz., the acquisition of divine knowledge in combination with true piety.

10. The tendency of the knowledge of God to inspire the righteous with the hope of future life, and remind the wicked of the punishments reserved for them. Its tendency, moreover, to keep alive in the hearts of the righteous a sense of the divine goodness.
11. The second part of the chapter, which describes the stupidity both of learned and unlearned, in ascribing the whole order of things, and the admirable arrangements of divine Providence, to fortune.
12. Hence Polytheism, with all its abominations, and the endless and irreconcilable opinions of the philosophers concerning God.
13. All guilty of revolt from God, corrupting pure religion, either by following general custom, or the impious consent of antiquity.
14. Though irradiated by the wondrous glories of creation, we cease not to follow our own ways.
15. Our conduct altogether inexcusable, the dulness of perception being attributable to ourselves, while we are fully reminded of the true path, both by the structure and the government of the world.

1. SINCE the perfection of blessedness consists in the knowledge of God, he has been pleased, in order that none might be excluded from the means of obtaining felicity, not only to deposit in our minds that seed of religion of which we have already spoken, but so to manifest his perfections in the whole structure of the universe, and daily place himself in our view, that we cannot open our eyes without being compelled to behold him. His essence, indeed, is incomprehensible, utterly transcending all human thought; but on each of his works his glory is engraven in characters so bright, so distinct, and so illustrious, that none, however dull and illiterate, can plead ignorance as their excuse. Hence, with perfect truth, the Psalmist exclaims, "He covereth himself with light as with a garment," (Psalm civ. 2;) as if he had said, that God for the first time was arrayed in visible attire when, in the creation of the world, he displayed those glorious banners, on which, to whatever side we turn, we behold his perfections visibly portrayed. In the same place, the Psalmist aptly compares the expanded heavens to his royal tent, and says, "He layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters, maketh the clouds his chariot, and walketh upon the wings of the wind," sending forth the winds and lightnings as his swift messengers. And because the glory of his power and wisdom is more refulgent in the



firmament, it is frequently designated as his palace. And, first, wherever you turn your eyes, there is no portion of the world, however minute, that does not exhibit at least some sparks of beauty; while it is impossible to contemplate the vast and beautiful fabric as it extends around, without being overwhelmed by the immense weight of glory. Hence, the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews elegantly describes the visible worlds as images of the invisible, (Heb. xi. 3,) the elegant structure of the world serving us as a kind of mirror, in which we may behold God, though otherwise invisible. For the same reason, the Psalmist attributes language to celestial objects, a language which all nations understand, (Psalm xix. 1;) the manifestation of the Godhead being too clear to escape the notice of any people, however obtuse. The apostle Paul, stating this still more clearly, says, "That which may be known of God is manifest in them, for God hath showed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead," (Rom. i. 20.)

2. In attestation of his wondrous wisdom, both the heavens and the earth present us with innumerable proofs, not only those more recondite proofs which astronomy, medicine, and all the natural sciences, are designed to illustrate, but proofs which force themselves on the notice of the most illiterate peasant, who cannot open his eyes without beholding them. It is true, indeed, that those who are more or less intimately acquainted with those liberal studies are thereby assisted and enabled to obtain a deeper insight into the secret workings of divine wisdom. No man, however, though he be ignorant of these, is incapacitated for discerning such proofs of creative wisdom as may well cause him to break forth in admiration of the Creator. To investigate the motions of the heavenly bodies, to determine their positions, measure their distances, and ascertain their properties, demands skill, and a more careful examination; and where these are so employed, as the Providence of God is thereby more fully unfolded, so it is reasonable to suppose that the mind takes a loftier flight, and obtains brighter



views of his glory.<sup>1</sup> Still, none who have the use of their eyes can be ignorant of the divine skill manifested so conspicuously in the endless variety, yet distinct and well-ordered array, of the heavenly host; and, therefore, it is plain that the Lord has furnished every man with abundant proofs of his wisdom. The same is true in regard to the structure of the human frame. To determine the connection of its parts, its symmetry and beauty, with the skill of a Galen, (*Lib. De Usu Partium*,) requires singular acuteness; and yet all men acknowledge that the human body bears on its face such proofs of ingenious contrivance as are sufficient to proclaim the admirable wisdom of its Maker.

3. Hence certain of the philosophers<sup>2</sup> have not improperly called man a *microcosm*, (*miniature world*,) as being a rare specimen of divine power, wisdom, and goodness, and containing within himself wonders sufficient to occupy our minds, if we are willing so to employ them. Paul, accordingly, after reminding the Athenians that they "might feel after God and find him," immediately adds, that "he is not far from every one of us," (*Acts xvii. 27*;) every man having within himself undoubted evidence of the heavenly grace by which he lives, and moves, and has his being. But if, in order to apprehend God, it is unnecessary to go farther than ourselves, what excuse can there be for the sloth of any man who will not take the trouble of descending into himself that he may find Him? For the same reason, too, David, after briefly celebrating the wonderful name and glory of God, as everywhere displayed, immediately exclaims, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him?" and again, "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast ordained strength," (*Psalm viii. 2, 4*.) Thus he declares not only that the human race are a bright mirror of the Creator's works, but that infants hanging on their mothers' breasts have tongues eloquent enough to proclaim his glory without the aid of other orators. Accordingly, he hesitates not to

<sup>1</sup> Augustinus: *Astrologia magnum religiosi argumentum, tormentumque curiosi.*

<sup>2</sup> See Aristot. *Hist. Anim. lib. i. c. 17*; Macrob. in *Somn. Scip. lib. ii. c. 12*; Boeth. *De Definitione*.

bring them forward as fully instructed to refute the madness of those who, from devilish pride, would fain extinguish the name of God. Hence, too, the passage which Paul quotes from Aratus, "We are his offspring," (Acts xvii. 28,) the excellent gifts with which he has endued us attesting that he is our Father. In the same way also, from natural instinct, and, as it were, at the dictation of experience, heathen poets called him the father of men. No one, indeed, will voluntarily and willingly devote himself to the service of God unless he has previously tasted his paternal love, and been thereby allured to love and reverence Him.

4. But herein appears the shameful ingratitude of men. Though they have in their own persons a factory where innumerable operations of God are carried on, and a magazine stored with treasures of inestimable value—instead of bursting forth in his praise, as they are bound to do, they, on the contrary, are the more inflated and swelled with pride. They feel how wonderfully God is working in them, and their own experience tells them of the vast variety of gifts which they owe to his liberality. Whether they will or not, they cannot but know that these are proofs of his Godhead, and yet they inwardly suppress them. They have no occasion to go farther than themselves, provided they do not, by appropriating as their own that which has been given them from heaven, put out the light intended to exhibit God clearly to their minds. At this day, however, the earth sustains on her bosom many monster minds—minds which are not afraid to employ the seed of Deity deposited in human nature as a means of suppressing the name of God. Can any thing be more detestable than this madness in man, who, finding God a hundred times both in his body and his soul, makes his excellence in this respect a pretext for denying that there is a God? He will not say that chance has made him differ from the brutes that perish; but, substituting nature as the architect of the universe, he suppresses the name of God. The swift motions of the soul, its noble faculties and rare endowments, bespeak the agency of God in a manner which would make the suppression of it impossible, did not the Epicureans, like so many Cyclops, use it as a vantage-

ground, from which to wage more audacious war with God. Are so many treasures of heavenly wisdom employed in the guidance of such a worm as man, and shall the whole universe be denied the same privilege? To hold that there are organs in the soul corresponding to each of its faculties, is so far from obscuring the glory of God, that it rather illustrates it. Let Epicurus tell what concourse of atoms, cooking meat and drink, can form one portion into refuse and another portion into blood, and make all the members separately perform their office as carefully as if they were so many souls acting with common consent in the superintendence of one body.

5. But my business at present is not with that stye: I wish rather to deal with those who, led away by absurd subtleties, are inclined, by giving an indirect turn to the frigid doctrine of Aristotle, to employ it for the purpose both of disproving the immortality of the soul, and robbing God of his rights. Under the pretext that the faculties of the soul are organised, they chain it to the body as if it were incapable of a separate existence, while they endeavour as much as in them lies, by pronouncing eulogiums on nature, to suppress the name of God. But there is no ground for maintaining that the powers of the soul are confined to the performance of bodily functions. What has the body to do with your measuring the heavens, counting the number of the stars, ascertaining their magnitudes, their relative distances, the rate at which they move, and the orbits which they describe? I deny not that Astronomy has its use; all I mean to show is, that these lofty investigations are not conducted by organised symmetry, but by the faculties of the soul itself apart altogether from the body. The single example I have given will suggest many others to the reader. The swift and versatile movements of the soul in glancing from heaven to earth, connecting the future with the past, retaining the remembrance of former years, nay, forming creations of its own—its skill, moreover, in making astonishing discoveries, and inventing so many wonderful arts, are sure indications of the agency of God in man. What shall we say of its activity when the body is asleep, its many revolving



thoughts, its many useful suggestions, its many solid arguments, nay, its presentiment of things yet to come? What shall we say but that man bears about with him a stamp of immortality which can never be effaced? But how is it possible for man to be divine, and yet not acknowledge his Creator? Shall we, by means of a power of judging implanted in our breast, distinguish between justice and injustice, and yet there be no judge in heaven? Shall some remains of intelligence continue with us in sleep, and yet no God keep watch in heaven? Shall we be deemed the inventors of so many arts and useful properties that God may be defrauded of his praise, though experience tells us plainly enough, that whatever we possess is dispensed to us in unequal measures by another hand? The talk of certain persons concerning a secret inspiration quickening the whole world, is not only silly, but altogether profane. Such persons are delighted with the following celebrated passage of Virgil :<sup>1</sup>—

“ Know, first, that heaven, and earth’s compacted frame,  
And flowing waters, and the starry flame,  
And both the radiant lights, one common soul  
Inspires and feeds—and animates the whole.  
This active mind, infused through all the space,  
Unites and mingles with the mighty mass :  
Hence, men and beasts the breath of life obtain,  
And birds of air, and monsters of the main.  
Th’ ethereal vigour is in all the same,  
And every soul is filled with equal flame.”<sup>2</sup>

The meaning of all this is, that the world, which was made to display the glory of God, is its own creator. For the same poet has, in another place,<sup>3</sup> adopted a view common to both Greeks and Latins :—

“ Hence to the bee some sages have assigned  
A portion of the God, and heavenly mind ;  
For God goes forth, and spreads throughout the whole,  
Heaven, earth, and sea, the universal soul ;

<sup>1</sup> *Æneid*, vi. 724, sq. See Calvin on Acts xvii. 28. Manil. lib. i. Astron.

<sup>2</sup> Dryden’s *Virgil*, *Æneid*, Book vi. l. 980-990.

<sup>3</sup> *Georgic* iv. 220. Plat. in *Tim.* Arist. lib. i. *De Animo*. See also *Metaph.* lib. i. Merc. Trismegr. in *Pimandro*.



Each, at its birth, from him all beings share,  
Both man and brute, the breath of vital air ;  
To him return, and, loosed from earthly chain,  
Fly whence they sprung, and rest in God again ;  
Spurn at the grave, and, fearless of decay,  
Dwell in high heaven, and star th' ethereal way."<sup>1</sup>

Here we see how far that jejune speculation, of a universal mind animating and invigorating the world, is fitted to beget and foster piety in our minds. We have a still clearer proof of this in the profane verses which the licentious Lucretius has written as a deduction from the same principle.<sup>2</sup> The plain object is to form an unsubstantial deity, and thereby banish the true God whom we ought to fear and worship. I admit, indeed, that the expression, "Nature is God," may be piously used, if dictated by a pious mind ; but as it is inaccurate and harsh, (Nature being more properly the order which has been established by God,) in matters which are so very important, and in regard to which special reverence is due, it does harm to confound the Deity with the inferior operations of his hands.

6. Let each of us, therefore, in contemplating his own nature, remember that there is one God who governs all natures, and, in governing, wishes us to have respect to himself, to make him the object of our faith, worship, and adoration. Nothing, indeed, can be more preposterous than to enjoy those noble endowments which bespeak the divine presence within us, and to neglect him who, of his own good pleasure, bestows them upon us. In regard to his power, how glorious the manifestations by which he urges us to the contemplation of himself ; unless, indeed, we pretend not to know whose energy it is that by a word sustains the boundless fabric of the universe—at one time making heaven reverberate with thunder, sending forth the scorching lightning, and setting the whole atmosphere in a

<sup>1</sup> Dryden's *Virgil*, Book iv. l. 252-262.

<sup>2</sup> He maintains, in the beginning of the First Book, that nothing is produced of nothing, but that all things are formed out of certain primitive materials. He also perverts the ordinary course of generation into an argument against the existence of God. In the Fifth Book, however, he admits that the world was born and will die.

blaze ; at another, causing the raging tempests to blow, and forthwith, in one moment, when it so pleases him, making a perfect calm ; keeping the sea, which seems constantly threatening the earth with devastation, suspended as it were in air ; at one time, lashing it into fury by the impetuosity of the winds ; at another, appeasing its rage, and stilling all its waves. Here we might refer to those glowing descriptions of divine power, as illustrated by natural events, which occur throughout Scripture ; but more especially in the book of Job, and the prophecies of Isaiah. These, however, I purposely omit, because a better opportunity of introducing them will be found when I come to treat of the Scriptural account of the creation. (*Infra*, chap. xiv. s. 1, 2, 20, *sq.*) I only wish to observe here, that this method of investigating the divine perfections, by tracing the lineaments of his countenance as shadowed forth in the firmament and on the earth, is common both to those within and to those without the pale of the Church. From the power of God we are naturally led to consider his eternity, since that from which all other things derive their origin must necessarily be self-existent and eternal. Moreover, if it be asked what cause induced him to create all things at first, and now inclines him to preserve them, we shall find that there could be no other cause than his own goodness. But if this is the only cause, nothing more should be required to draw forth our love towards him ; every creature, as the Psalmist reminds us, participating in his mercy. “His tender mercies are over all his works,” (Ps. cxlv. 9.)

7. In the second class of God’s works, namely, those which are above the ordinary course of nature, the evidence of his perfections are in every respect equally clear. For in conducting the affairs of men, he so arranges the course of his providence, as daily to declare, by the clearest manifestations, that though all are in innumerable ways the partakers of his bounty, the righteous are the special objects of his favour, the wicked and profane the special objects of his severity. It is impossible to doubt his punishment of crimes ; while at the same time he, in no unequivocal manner, declares that he is the protector, and even the avenger of innocence,

by shedding blessings on the good, helping their necessities, soothing and solacing their griefs, relieving their sufferings, and in all ways providing for their safety. And though he often permits the guilty to exult for a time with impunity, and the innocent to be driven to and fro in adversity, nay, even to be wickedly and iniquitously oppressed, this ought not to produce any uncertainty as to the uniform justice of all his procedure. Nay, an opposite inference should be drawn. When any one crime calls forth visible manifestations of his anger, it must be because he hates all crimes; and, on the other hand, his leaving many crimes unpunished, only proves that there is a judgment in reserve, when the punishment now delayed shall be inflicted. In like manner, how richly does he supply us with the means of contemplating his mercy, when, as frequently happens, he continues to visit miserable sinners with unwearied kindness, until he subdues their depravity, and woos them back with more than a parent's fondness?

8. To this purpose the Psalmist, (Ps. cvii.) mentioning how God, in a wondrous manner, often brings sudden and unexpected succour to the miserable when almost on the brink of despair, whether in protecting them when they stray in deserts, and at length leading them back into the right path, or supplying them with food when famishing for want, or delivering them when captive from iron fetters and foul dungeons, or conducting them safe into harbour after shipwreck, or bringing them back from the gates of death by curing their diseases, or, after burning up the fields with heat and drought, fertilizing them with the river of his grace, or exalting the meanest of the people, and casting down the mighty from their lofty seats:—the Psalmist, after bringing forward examples of this description, infers that those things which men call fortuitous events, are so many proofs of divine providence, and more especially of paternal clemency, furnishing ground of joy to the righteous, and at the same time stopping the mouths of the ungodly. But as the greater part of mankind, enslaved by error, walk blindfold in this glorious theatre, he exclaims that it is a rare and singular wisdom to meditate carefully on these works of



God, which many, who seem most sharp-sighted in other respects, behold without profit. It is indeed true, that the brightest manifestation of divine glory finds not one genuine spectator among a hundred. Still, neither his power nor his wisdom is shrouded in darkness. His power is strikingly displayed when the rage of the wicked, to all appearance irresistible, is crushed in a single moment; their arrogance subdued, their strongest bulwarks overthrown, their armour dashed to pieces, their strength broken, their schemes defeated without an effort, and audacity which set itself above the heavens is precipitated to the lowest depths of the earth. On the other hand, the poor are raised up out of the dust, and the needy lifted out of the dunghill, (Ps. cxiii. 7,) the oppressed and afflicted are rescued in extremity, the despairing animated with hope, the unarmed defeat the armed, the few the many, the weak the strong. The excellence of the divine wisdom is manifested in distributing everything in due season, confounding the wisdom of the world, and taking the wise in their own craftiness, (1 Cor. iii. 19;) in short, conducting all things in perfect accordance with reason.

9. We see there is no need of a long and laborious train of argument in order to obtain proofs which illustrate and assert the Divine Majesty. The few which we have merely touched, show them to be so immediately within our reach in every quarter, that we can trace them with the eye, or point to them with the finger. And here we must observe again, (see chap. ii. s. 2,) that the knowledge of God which we are invited to cultivate is not that which, resting satisfied with empty speculation, only flutters in the brain, but a knowledge which will prove substantial and fruitful wherever it is duly perceived, and rooted in the heart. The Lord is manifested by his perfections. When we feel their power within us, and are conscious of their benefits, the knowledge must impress us much more vividly than if we merely imagined a God whose presence we never felt. Hence it is obvious, that in seeking God, the most direct path and the fittest method is, not to attempt with presumptuous curiosity to pry into his essence, which is rather to be adored than minutely discussed, but to contemplate him in his works, by which



he draws near, becomes familiar, and in a manner communicates himself to us. To this the Apostle referred when he said, that we need not go far in search of him, (Acts xvii. 27,) because, by the continual working of his power, he dwells in every one of us. Accordingly, David, (Psalm cxlv.,) after acknowledging that his greatness is unsearchable, proceeds to enumerate his works, declaring that his greatness will thereby be unfolded. It therefore becomes us also diligently to prosecute that investigation of God which so enraptures the soul with admiration as, at the same time, to make an efficacious impression on it. And, as Augustine expresses it, (in Psalm cxliv.,) since we are unable to comprehend Him, and are, as it were, overpowered by his greatness, our proper course is to contemplate his works, and so refresh ourselves with his goodness.

10. By the knowledge thus acquired, we ought not only to be stimulated to worship God, but also aroused and elevated to the hope of future life. For, observing that the manifestations which the Lord gives both of his mercy and severity are only begun and incomplete, we ought to infer that these are doubtless only a prelude to higher manifestations, of which the full display is reserved for another state. Conversely, when we see the righteous brought into affliction by the ungodly, assailed with injuries, overwhelmed with calumnies, and lacerated by insult and contumely, while, on the contrary, the wicked flourish, prosper, acquire ease and honour, and all these with impunity, we ought forthwith to infer, that there will be a future life in which iniquity shall receive its punishment, and righteousness its reward. Moreover, when we observe that the Lord often lays his chastening rod on the righteous, we may the more surely conclude, that far less will the righteous ultimately escape the scourges of his anger. There is a well-known passage in Augustine, (*De Civitat. Dei*, lib. i. c. 8,) "Were all sin now visited with open punishment, it might be thought that nothing was reserved for the final judgment; and, on the other hand, were no sin now openly punished, it might be supposed there was no divine providence." It must be acknowledged, therefore, that in each of the works of God,

and more especially in the whole of them taken together, the divine perfections are delineated as in a picture, and the whole human race thereby invited and allured to acquire the knowledge of God, and, in consequence of this knowledge, true and complete felicity. Moreover, while his perfections are thus most vividly displayed, the only means of ascertaining their practical operation and tendency is to descend into ourselves, and consider how it is that the Lord there manifests his wisdom, power, and energy,—how he there displays his justice, goodness, and mercy. For although David (Psalm xcii. 6) justly complains of the extreme infatuation of the ungodly in not pondering the deep counsels of God, as exhibited in the government of the human race, what he elsewhere says (Psalm xl.) is most true, that the wonders of the divine wisdom in this respect are more in number than the hairs of our head. But I leave this topic at present, as it will be more fully considered afterwards in its own place, (Book I. c. 16, sec. 6–9.)

11. Bright, however, as is the manifestation which God gives both of himself and his immortal kingdom in the mirror of his works, so great is our stupidity, so dull are we in regard to these bright manifestations, that we derive no benefit from them. For in regard to the fabric and admirable arrangement of the universe, how few of us are there who, in lifting our eyes to the heavens, or looking abroad on the various regions of the earth, ever think of the Creator? Do we not rather overlook Him, and sluggishly content ourselves with a view of his works? And then in regard to supernatural events, though these are occurring every day, how few are there who ascribe them to the ruling providence of God—how many who imagine that they are casual results produced by the blind evolutions of the wheel of chance? Even when, under the guidance and direction of these events, we are in a manner forced to the contemplation of God, (a circumstance which all must occasionally experience,) and are thus led to form some impressions of Deity, we immediately fly off to carnal dreams and depraved fictions, and so by our vanity corrupt heavenly truth. This far, indeed, we differ from each other, in that every one

appropriates to himself some peculiar error; but we are all alike in this, that we substitute monstrous fictions for the one living and true God—a disease not confined to obtuse and vulgar minds, but affecting the noblest, and those who, in other respects, are singularly acute. How lavishly in this respect have the whole body of philosophers betrayed their stupidity and want of sense? To say nothing of the others whose absurdities are of a still grosser description, how completely does Plato, the soberest and most religious of them all, lose himself in his round globe?<sup>1</sup> What must be the case with the rest, when the leaders, who ought to have set them an example, commit such blunders, and labour under such hallucinations? In like manner, while the government of the world places the doctrine of providence beyond dispute, the practical result is the same as if it were believed that all things were carried hither and thither at the caprice of chance; so prone are we to vanity and error. I am still referring to the most distinguished of the philosophers, and not to the common herd, whose madness in profaning the truth of God exceeds all bounds.

12. Hence that immense flood of error with which the whole world is overflowed. Every individual mind being a kind of labyrinth, it is not wonderful, not only that each nation has adopted a variety of fictions, but, that almost every man has had his own god. To the darkness of ignorance have been added presumption and wantonness, and hence there is scarcely an individual to be found without some idol or phantom as a substitute for Deity. Like water gushing forth from a large and copious spring, immense crowds of gods have issued from the human mind, every man giving himself full license, and devising some peculiar form of divinity, to meet his own views. It is unnecessary here to attempt a catalogue of the superstitions with which the world was overspread. The thing were endless; and the corruptions themselves, though not a word should be said, furnish abundant evidence of the blindness of the human mind. I say nothing of the rude and illiterate vulgar; but

<sup>1</sup> Plato in *Timæos*. See also Cic. *De Nat. Deorum*, lib. i.; Plut. *De Philos. Placitis*, lib. i.



among the philosophers<sup>1</sup> who attempted, by reason and learning, to pierce the heavens, what shameful disagreement ! The higher any one was endued with genius, and the more he was polished by science and art, the more specious was the colouring which he gave to his opinions. All these, however, if examined more closely, will be found to be vain show. The Stoics plumed themselves on their acuteness, when they said<sup>2</sup> that the various names of God might be extracted from all the parts of nature, and yet that his unity was not thereby divided : as if we were not already too prone to vanity, and had no need of being presented with an endless multiplicity of gods, to lead us further and more grossly into error. The mystic theology of the Egyptians shows how sedulously they laboured to be thought rational on this subject.<sup>3</sup> And, perhaps, at the first glance, some show of probability might deceive the simple and unwary ; but never did any mortal devise a scheme by which religion was not foully corrupted. This endless variety and confusion emboldened the Epicureans, and other gross despisers of piety, to cut off all sense of God. For when they saw that the wisest contradicted each other, they hesitated not to infer from their dissensions, and from the frivolous and absurd doctrines of each, that men foolishly, and to no purpose, brought torment upon themselves by searching for a God, there being none : and they thought this inference safe, because it was better at once to deny God altogether, than to feign uncertain gods, and thereafter engage in quarrels without end. They, indeed, argue absurdly, or rather weave a cloak for their impiety out of human ignorance ; though ignorance surely cannot derogate from the prerogatives of God. But since all confess that there is no topic on which such difference exists, both among learned and unlearned, the proper inference is, that the human mind, which thus errs in inquiring after God, is dull and blind in heavenly mysteries. Some praise the answer of Simonides, who being asked by King Hiero what God was, asked a day

<sup>1</sup> Cicero : Qui deos esse dixerunt tanta sunt in varietate ac dissensione, ut eorum molestum sit enumerare sententias.—Cicero, *De Nat. Deorum*, lib. i. and ii. *Lactant. Inst. Div.* lib. i. &c.

<sup>2</sup> Seneca, *De Benef.*, lib. iv. c. 7, et *Natural. Quæst.* lib. i. in *Præf.*, et lib. ii. c. 45.

<sup>3</sup> Plutarch. lib. *De Iside et Osiride*.



to consider. When the king next day repeated the question, he asked two days ; and after repeatedly doubling the number of days, at length replied, "The longer I consider, the darker the subject appears."<sup>1</sup> He, no doubt, wisely suspended his opinion, when he did not see clearly : still his answer shows, that if men are only naturally taught, instead of having any distinct, solid, or certain knowledge, they fasten only on contradictory principles, and, in consequence, worship an unknown God.

13. Hence we must hold, that whosoever adulterates pure religion, (and this must be the case with all who cling to their own views,) make a departure from the one God. No doubt, they will allege that they have a different intention ; but it is of little consequence what they intend or persuade themselves to believe, since the Holy Spirit pronounces all to be apostates, who, in the blindness of their minds, substitute demons in the place of God. For this reason Paul declares that the Ephesians were "without God," (Eph. ii. 12,) until they had learned from the Gospel what it is to worship the true God. Nor must this be restricted to one people only, since, in another place, he declares in general, that all men "became vain in their imaginations," after the majesty of the Creator was manifested to them in the structure of the world. Accordingly, in order to make way for the only true God, he condemns all the gods celebrated among the Gentiles as lying and false, leaving no Deity anywhere but in Mount Zion, where the special knowledge of God was professed, (Hab. ii. 18, 20.) Among the Gentiles in the time of Christ, the Samaritans undoubtedly made the nearest approach to true piety ; yet we hear from his own mouth that they worshipped they knew not what, (John iv. 22 ;) whence it follows that they were deluded by vain errors. In short, though all did not give way to gross vice, or rush headlong into open idolatry, there was no pure and authentic religion founded merely on common belief. A few individuals may not have gone all insane lengths with the vulgar ; still Paul's declaration remains true, that the wisdom of God was

<sup>1</sup> Cicero, *De Nat. Deor.* lib. i.

not apprehended by the princes of this world, (1 Cor. ii. 8.) But if the most distinguished wandered in darkness, what shall we say of the refuse? No wonder, therefore, that all worship of man's device is repudiated by the Holy Spirit as degenerate. Any opinion which man can form in heavenly mysteries, though it may not beget a long train of errors, is still the parent of error. And though nothing worse should happen, even this is no light sin—to worship an unknown God at random. Of this sin, however, we hear from our Saviour's own mouth, (John iv. 22,) that all are guilty who have not been taught out of the law who the God is whom they ought to worship. Nay, even Socrates in Xenophon, (lib. i. Memorabilia,) lauds the response of Apollo enjoining every man to worship the gods according to the rites of his country, and the particular practice of his own city. But what right have mortals thus to decide of their own authority in a matter which is far above the world; or who can so acquiesce in the will of his forefathers, or the decrees of the people, as unhesitatingly to receive a god at their hands? Every one will adhere to his own judgment, sooner than submit to the dictation of others. Since, therefore, in regulating the worship of God, the custom of a city, or the consent of antiquity, is a too feeble and fragile bond of piety; it remains that God himself must bear witness to himself from heaven.

14. In vain for us, therefore, does Creation exhibit so many bright lamps lighted up to show forth the glory of its Author. Though they beam upon us from every quarter, they are altogether insufficient of themselves to lead us into the right path. Some sparks, undoubtedly, they do throw out; but these are quenched before they can give forth a brighter effulgence. Wherefore, the apostle, in the very place where he says that the worlds are images of invisible things, adds that it is *by faith* we understand that they were framed by the word of God, (Heb. xi. 3;) thereby intimating that the invisible Godhead is indeed represented by such displays, but that we have no eyes to perceive it until they are enlightened through faith by internal revelation from God. When Paul says that that which may be known

of God is manifested by the creation of the world, he does not mean such a manifestation as may be comprehended by the wit of man, (Rom. i. 19;) on the contrary, he shows that it has no further effect than to render us inexcusable, (Acts xvii. 27.) And though he says, elsewhere, that we have not far to seek for God, inasmuch as he dwells within us, he shows, in another passage, to what extent this nearness to God is availing. God, says he, "in times past, suffered all nations to walk in their own ways. Nevertheless, he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness," (Acts xiv. 16, 17.) But though God is not left without a witness, while, with numberless varied acts of kindness, he woos men to the knowledge of himself, yet they cease not to follow their own ways, in other words, deadly errors.

15. But though we are deficient in natural powers which might enable us to rise to a pure and clear knowledge of God, still, as the dulness which prevents us is within, there is no room for excuse. We cannot plead ignorance, without being at the same time convicted by our own consciences both of sloth and ingratitude. It were, indeed, a strange defence for man to pretend that he has no ears to hear the truth, while dumb creatures have voices loud enough to declare it; to allege that he is unable to see that which creatures without eyes demonstrate; to excuse himself on the ground of weakness of mind, while all creatures without reason are able to teach. Wherefore, when we wander and go astray, we are justly shut out from every species of excuse, because all things point to the right path. But while man must bear the guilt of corrupting the seed of divine knowledge so wondrously deposited in his mind, and preventing it from bearing good and genuine fruit, it is still most true that we are not sufficiently instructed by that bare and simple, but magnificent testimony which the creatures bear to the glory of their Creator. For no sooner do we, from a survey of the world, obtain some slight knowledge of Deity, than we pass by the true God, and set up in his stead the dream and phantom of

our own brain, drawing away the praise of justice, wisdom, and goodness, from the fountain-head, and transferring it to some other quarter. Moreover, by the erroneous estimate we form, we either so obscure or pervert his daily works, as at once to rob them of their glory, and the author of them of his just praise.



## CHAPTER VI.

THE NEED OF SCRIPTURE, AS A GUIDE AND TEACHER, IN  
COMING TO GOD AS A CREATOR.*Sections.*

1. God gives his elect a better help to the knowledge of himself, viz., the Holy Scriptures. This he did from the very first.
2. First, By oracles and visions, and the ministry of the Patriarchs. Secondly, By the promulgation of the Law, and the preaching of the Prophets. Why the doctrines of religion are committed to writing.
3. This view confirmed, 1. By the depravity of our nature making it necessary in every one who would know God to have recourse to the word; 2. From those passages of the Psalms in which God is introduced as reigning.
4. Another confirmation from certain direct statements in the Psalms. Lastly, From the words of our Saviour.

1. THEREFORE, though the effulgence which is presented to every eye, both in the heavens and on the earth, leaves the ingratitude of man without excuse, since God, in order to bring the whole human race under the same condemnation, holds forth to all, without exception, a mirror of his Deity in his works, another and better help must be given to guide us properly to God as a Creator. Not in vain, therefore, has he added the light of his Word in order that he might make himself known unto salvation, and bestowed the privilege on those whom he was pleased to bring into nearer and more familiar relation to himself. For, seeing how the minds of men were carried to and fro, and found no certain resting-place, he chose the Jews for a peculiar people, and then hedged them in that they might not, like others, go astray. And not in vain does he, by the same means, retain us in his knowledge, since but for this, even those who, in comparison of others, seem to stand strong, would quickly fall away. For as the aged, or those whose sight is defec-

tive, when any book, however fair, is set before them, though they perceive that there is something written, are scarcely able to make out two consecutive words, but, when aided by glasses, begin to read distinctly, so Scripture, gathering together the impressions of Deity, which, till then, lay confused in our minds, dissipates the darkness, and shows us the true God clearly. God therefore bestows a gift of singular value, when, for the instruction of the Church, he employs not dumb teachers merely, but opens his own sacred mouth; when he not only proclaims that some God must be worshipped, but at the same time declares that He is the God to whom worship is due; when he not only teaches his elect to have respect to God, but manifests himself as the God to whom this respect should be paid.

The course which God followed towards his Church from the very first, was to supplement these common proofs by the addition of his Word, as a surer and more direct means of discovering himself. And there can be no doubt that it was by this help, Adam, Noah, Abraham, and the other patriarchs, attained to that familiar knowledge which, in a manner, distinguished them from unbelievers. I am not now speaking of the peculiar doctrines of faith by which they were elevated to the hope of eternal blessedness. It was necessary, in passing from death unto life, that they should know God, not only as a Creator, but as a Redeemer also; and both kinds of knowledge they certainly did obtain from the Word. In point of order, however, the knowledge first given was that which made them acquainted with the God by whom the world was made and is governed. To this first knowledge was afterwards added the more intimate knowledge which alone quickens dead souls, and by which God is known, not only as the Creator of the world, and the sole author and disposer of all events, but also as a Redeemer, in the person of the Mediator. But as the fall and the corruption of nature have not yet been considered, I now postpone the consideration of the remedy, (for which, see Book II. c. vi. &c.) Let the reader then remember, that I am not now treating of the covenant by which God adopted the children of Abraham, or of that

branch of doctrine by which, as founded in Christ, believers have, properly speaking, been in all ages separated from the profane heathen. I am only showing that it is necessary to apply to Scripture, in order to learn the sure marks which distinguish God, as the Creator of the world, from the whole herd of fictitious gods. We shall afterward, in due course, consider the work of Redemption. In the meantime, though we shall adduce many passages from the New Testament, and some also from the Law and the Prophets, in which express mention is made of Christ, the only object will be to show that God, the Maker of the world, is manifested to us in Scripture, and his true character expounded, so as to save us from wandering up and down, as in a labyrinth, in search of some doubtful deity.

2. Whether God revealed himself to the fathers by oracles and visions,<sup>1</sup> or, by the instrumentality and ministry of men, suggested what they were to hand down to posterity, there cannot be a doubt that the certainty of what he taught them was firmly engraven on their hearts, so that they felt assured and knew that the things which they learnt came forth from God, who invariably accompanied his word with a sure testimony, infinitely superior to mere opinion. At length, in order that, while doctrine was continually enlarged, its truth might subsist in the world during all ages, it was his pleasure that the same oracles which he had deposited with the fathers should be consigned, as it were, to public records. With this view the law was promulgated, and prophets were afterwards added to be its interpreters. For though the uses of the law were manifold, (Book II. c. 7 and 8,) and the special office assigned to Moses and all the prophets was to teach the method of reconciliation between God and man, (whence Paul calls Christ "the end of the law," Rom. x. 4;) still I repeat that, in addition to the proper doctrine of faith and repentance in which Christ is set forth as a Mediator, the Scriptures employ certain marks and tokens to distinguish the only wise and true God, considered as the Creator and Governor of the world, and thereby guard

<sup>1</sup> The French adds, "C'est à dire, temoignages celestes;"—that is to say, messages from heaven.



against his being confounded with the herd of false deities. Therefore, while it becomes man seriously to employ his eyes in considering the works of God, since a place has been assigned him in this most glorious theatre that he may be a spectator of them, his special duty is to give ear to the Word, that he may the better profit.<sup>1</sup> Hence, it is not strange that those who are born in darkness become more and more hardened in their stupidity; because the vast majority, instead of confining themselves within due bounds by listening with docility to the Word, exult in their own vanity. If true religion is to beam upon us, our principle must be, that it is necessary to begin with heavenly teaching, and that it is impossible for any man to obtain even the minutest portion of right and sound doctrine without being a disciple of Scripture. Hence, the first step in true knowledge is taken, when we reverently embrace the testimony which God has been pleased therein to give of himself. For not only does faith, full and perfect faith, but all correct knowledge of God, originate in obedience. And surely in this respect God has with singular Providence provided for mankind in all ages.

3. For if we reflect how prone the human mind is to lapse into forgetfulness of God, how readily inclined to every kind of error, how bent every now and then on devising new and fictitious religions, it will be easy to understand how necessary it was to make such a depository of doctrine as would secure it from either perishing by the neglect, vanishing away amid the errors, or being corrupted by the presumptuous audacity of men. It being thus manifest that God, foreseeing the inefficiency of his image imprinted on the fair form of the universe, has given the assistance of his Word to all whom he has ever been pleased to instruct effectually, we, too, must pursue this straight path, if we aspire in earnest to a genuine contemplation of God;—we must go, I say, to the Word, where the character of God, drawn from his works, is described accurately and to the life; these works

<sup>1</sup> Tertullian, *Apologet. adv. Gentes*: “Quæ plenius et impressius tam ipsum quam dispositiones ejus et voluntates adiremus, instrumentum adjecit literaturæ,” &c.



being estimated, not by our depraved judgment, but by the standard of eternal truth. If, as I lately said, we turn aside from it, how great soever the speed with which we move, we shall never reach the goal, because we are off the course. We should consider that the brightness of the Divine countenance, which even an apostle declares to be inaccessible, (1 Tim. vi. 16,) is a kind of labyrinth,—a labyrinth to us inextricable, if the Word do not serve us as a thread to guide our path; and that it is better to limp in the way, than run with the greatest swiftness out of it. Hence the Psalmist, after repeatedly declaring (Psalm xciii. xcvi. xcvii. xcix. &c.) that superstition should be banished from the world in order that pure religion may flourish, introduces God as *reigning*; meaning by the term, not the power which he possesses and which he exerts in the government of universal nature, but the doctrine by which he maintains his due supremacy: because error never can be eradicated from the heart of man until the true knowledge of God has been implanted in it.

4. Accordingly, the same prophet, after mentioning that the heavens declare the glory of God, that the firmament showeth forth the works of his hands, that the regular succession of day and night proclaim his Majesty, proceeds to make mention of the Word:—"The law of the Lord," says he, "is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes," (Psalm xix. 1-9.) For though the law has other uses besides, (as to which, see Book II. c. 7, sec. 6, 10, 12,) the general meaning is, that it is the proper school for training the children of God; the invitation given to all nations, to behold him in the heavens and earth, proving of no avail. The same view is taken in the xxix. Psalm, where the Psalmist, after discoursing on the dreadful voice of God, which, in thunder, wind, rain, whirlwind, and tempest, shakes the earth, makes the mountains tremble, and breaks the cedars, concludes by saying, "that in his temple doth every one speak of his glory," unbelievers being deaf to all God's words when they echo in the air. In like manner another Psalm, after describing the raging billows

of the sea, thus concludes, "Thy testimonies are very sure; holiness becometh thine house for ever," (Psalm xciii. 5.) To the same effect are the words of our Saviour to the Samaritan woman, when he told her that her nation and all other nations worshipped they knew not what; and that the Jews alone gave worship to the true God, (John iv. 22.) Since the human mind, through its weakness, was altogether unable to come to God if not aided and upheld by his sacred word, it necessarily followed that all mankind, the Jews excepted, inasmuch as they sought God without the Word, were labouring under vanity and error.

## CHAPTER VII.

THE TESTIMONY OF THE SPIRIT NECESSARY TO GIVE FULL AUTHORITY TO SCRIPTURE. THE IMPIETY OF PRETENDING THAT THE CREDIBILITY OF SCRIPTURE DEPENDS ON THE JUDGMENT OF THE CHURCH.

*Sections.*

1. The authority of Scripture derived not from men, but from the Spirit of God. Objection, That Scripture depends on the decision of the Church. Refutation, I. The truth of God would thus be subjected to the will of man. II. It is insulting to the Holy Spirit. III. It establishes a tyranny in the Church. IV. It forms a mass of errors. V. It subverts conscience. VI. It exposes our faith to the scoffs of the profane.
2. Another reply to the objection drawn from the words of the Apostle Paul. Solution of the difficulties started by opponents. A second objection refuted.
3. A third objection founded on a sentiment of Augustine considered.
4. Conclusion, That the authority of Scripture is founded on its being spoken by God. This confirmed by the conscience of the godly, and the consent of all men of the least candour. A fourth objection common in the mouths of the profane. Refutation.
5. Last and necessary conclusion, That the authority of Scripture is sealed on the hearts of believers by the testimony of the Holy Spirit. The certainty of this testimony. Confirmation of it from a passage of Isaiah, and the experience of believers. Also, from another passage of Isaiah.

1. BEFORE proceeding farther, it seems proper to make some observations on the authority of Scripture, in order that our minds may not only be prepared to receive it with reverence, but be divested of all doubt.

When that which professes to be the Word of God is acknowledged to be so, no person, unless devoid of common sense and the feelings of a man, will have the desperate hardihood to refuse credit to the speaker. But since no daily responses are given from heaven, and the Scriptures ✓

are the only records in which God has been pleased to consign his truth to perpetual remembrance, the full authority which they ought to possess with the faithful is not recognised, unless they are believed to have come from heaven, as directly as if God had been heard giving utterance to them. This subject well deserves to be treated more at large, and pondered more accurately. But my readers will pardon me for having more regard to what my plan admits than to what the extent of this topic requires.

A most pernicious error has very generally prevailed; viz., that Scripture is of importance only in so far as conceded to it by the suffrage of the Church; as if the eternal and inviolable truth of God could depend on the will of men. With great insult to the Holy Spirit, it is asked, Who can assure us that the Scriptures proceeded from God; who guarantee that they have come down safe and unimpaired to our times; who persuade us that *this* book is to be received with reverence, and *that one* expunged from the list, did not the Church regulate all these things with certainty? On the determination of the Church, therefore, it is said, depend both the reverence which is due to Scripture, and the books which are to be admitted into the canon. Thus profane men, seeking, under the pretext of the Church, to introduce unbridled tyranny, care not in what absurdities they entangle themselves and others, provided they extort from the simple this one acknowledgment, viz., that there is nothing which the Church cannot do. But what is to become of miserable consciences in quest of some solid assurance of eternal life, if all the promises with regard to it have no better support than man's judgment? On being told so, will they cease to doubt and tremble? On the other hand, to what jeers of the wicked is our faith subjected—into how great suspicion is it brought with all, if believed to have only a precarious authority lent to it by the good will of men?

2. These ravings are admirably refuted by a single expression of an apostle. Paul testifies that the Church is "built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets," (Eph. ii. 20.) If the doctrine of the apostles and prophets is the foundation of the Church, the former must have had its cer-



tainty before the latter began to exist. Nor is there any room for the cavil, that though the Church derives her first beginning from thence, it still remains doubtful what writings are to be attributed to the apostles and prophets, until her judgment is interposed. For if the Christian Church was founded at first on the writings of the prophets, and the preaching of the apostles, that doctrine, wheresoever it may be found, was certainly ascertained and sanctioned antecedently to the Church, since, but for this, the Church herself never could have existed.<sup>1</sup> Nothing, therefore, can be more absurd than the fiction, that the power of judging Scripture is in the Church, and that on her nod its certainty depends. When the Church receives it, and gives it the stamp of her authority, she does not make that authentic which was otherwise doubtful or controverted, but, acknowledging it as the truth of God, she, as in duty bound, shows her reverence by an unhesitating assent. As to the question, How shall we be persuaded that it came from God without recurring to a decree of the Church? it is just the same as if it were asked, How shall we learn to distinguish light from darkness, white from black, sweet from bitter? Scripture bears upon the face of it as clear evidence of its truth, as white and black do of their colour, sweet and bitter of their taste.

3. I am aware it is usual to quote a sentence of Augustine, in which he says that he would not believe the gospel, were he not moved by the authority of the Church, (Aug. Cont. Epist. Fundament. c. v.) But it is easy to discover from the context, how inaccurate and unfair it is to give it such a meaning. He was reasoning against the Manichees, who insisted on being implicitly believed, alleging that they had the truth, though they did not show they had. But as they pretended to appeal to the gospel in support of Manes, he asks what they would do if they fell in with a man who did not even believe the gospel—what kind of argument they would use to bring him over to their opinion. He afterwards adds, “But I would not believe the gospel,” &c.; meaning, that were he a stranger to the faith, the only thing which could induce

<sup>1</sup> The French adds, “Comme le fondement va devant l’edifice;”—as the foundation goes before the house.

him to embrace the gospel would be the authority of the Church. And is it any thing wonderful, that one who does not know Christ should pay respect to men?

Augustine, therefore, does not here say that the faith of the godly is founded on the authority of the Church; nor does he mean that the certainty of the gospel depends upon it; he merely says that unbelievers would have no certainty of the gospel, so as thereby to win Christ, were they not influenced by the consent of the Church. And he clearly shows this to be his meaning, by thus expressing himself a little before: "When I have praised my own creed, and ridiculed yours, who do you suppose is to judge between us; or what more is to be done than to quit those who, inviting us to certainty, afterwards command us to believe uncertainty, and follow those who invite us, in the first instance, to believe what we are not yet able to comprehend, that waxing stronger through faith itself, we may become able to understand what we believe—no longer men, but God himself internally strengthening and illuminating our minds?" These unquestionably are the words of Augustine, (*August. Cont. Epist. Fundament. cap. iv.;*) and the obvious inference from them is, that this holy man had no intention to suspend our faith in Scripture on the nod or decision of the Church,<sup>1</sup> but only to intimate (what we too admit to be true) that those who are not yet enlightened by the Spirit of God, become teachable by reverence for the Church, and thus submit to learn the faith of Christ from the gospel. In this way, though the authority of the Church leads us on, and prepares us to believe in the gospel, it is plain that Augustine would have the certainty of the godly to rest on a very different foundation.<sup>2</sup>

At the same time, I deny not that he often presses the

<sup>1</sup> The French adds, "*la destournant du seul fondement qu'elle a en l'Ecriture*;"—diverting it from the only foundation which it has in Scripture.

<sup>2</sup> *Augustin. De Ordine, lib. ii. c. 9.* "Ad discendum dupliciter movetur, auctoritate atque ratione: tempore auctoritas, re autem ratio prior est," &c. "Itaque quamquam honorum auctoritas imperitæ multitudini videatur esse salubrior, ratio vero aptior eruditis: tamen quia nullus hominum nisi ex imperito peritus fit, &c., evenit ut omnibus bona, magna, occulta discere cupientibus, non aperiatur nisi auctoritas janua," &c. He has many other excellent things to the same effect.

Manichees with the consent of the whole Church, while arguing in support of the Scriptures, which they rejected. Hence he upbraids Faustus (Lib. xxxii.) for not submitting to evangelical truth—truth so well founded, so firmly established, so gloriously renowned, and handed down by sure succession from the days of the apostles. But he nowhere insinuates that the authority which we give to the Scriptures depends on the definitions or devices of men. He only brings forward the universal judgment of the Church, as a point most pertinent to the cause, and one, moreover, in which he had the advantage of his opponents. Any one who desires to see this more fully proved may read his short treatise, *De Utilitate Credendi*, (The Advantages of Believing,) where it will be found that the only facility of believing which he recommends is that which affords an introduction, and forms a fit commencement to inquiry; while he declares that we ought not to be satisfied with opinion, but to strive after substantial truth.

4. It is necessary to attend to what I lately said, that our faith in doctrine is not established until we have a perfect conviction that God is its author. Hence, the highest proof of Scripture is uniformly taken from the character of him whose Word it is. The prophets and apostles boast not their own acuteness, or any qualities which win credit to speakers, nor do they dwell on reasons; but they appeal to the sacred name of God, in order that the whole world may be compelled to submission. The next thing to be considered is, how it appears not probable merely, but certain, that the name of God is neither rashly nor cunningly pretended. If, then, we would consult most effectually for our consciences, and save them from being driven about in a whirl of uncertainty, from wavering, and even stumbling at the smallest obstacle, our conviction of the truth of Scripture must be derived from a higher source than human conjectures, judgments, or reasons; namely, the secret testimony of the Spirit. It is true, indeed, that if we choose to proceed in the way of argument, it is easy to establish, by evidence of various kinds, that if there is a God in heaven, the Law, the Prophecies, and the Gospel, proceeded



from him. Nay, although learned men, and men of the greatest talent, should take the opposite side, summoning and ostentatiously displaying all the powers of their genius in the discussion; if they are not possessed of shameless effrontery, they will be compelled to confess that the Scripture exhibits clear evidence of its being spoken by God, and, consequently, of its containing his heavenly doctrine. We shall see a little farther on, that the volume of sacred Scripture very far surpasses all other writings. Nay, if we look at it with clear eyes, and unbiassed judgment, it will forthwith present itself with a divine majesty which will subdue our presumptuous opposition, and force us to do it homage.

Still, however, it is preposterous to attempt, by discussion, to rear up a full faith in Scripture. True, were I called to contend with the craftiest despisers of God, I trust, though I am not possessed of the highest ability or eloquence, I should not find it difficult to stop their obstreperous mouths; I could, without much ado, put down the boastings which they mutter in corners, were anything to be gained by refuting their cavils. But although we may maintain the sacred Word of God against gainsayers, it does not follow that we shall forthwith implant the certainty which faith requires in their hearts. Profane men think that religion rests only on opinion, and, therefore, that they may not believe foolishly, or on slight grounds, desire and insist to have it proved by reason that Moses and the prophets were divinely inspired. But I answer, that the testimony of the Spirit is superior to reason. For as God alone can properly bear witness to his own words, so these words will not obtain full credit in the hearts of men, until they are sealed by the inward testimony of the Spirit. The same Spirit, therefore, who spoke by the mouth of the prophets, must penetrate our hearts, in order to convince us that they faithfully delivered the message with which they were divinely entrusted. This connection is most aptly expressed by Isaiah in these words, "My Spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed,



nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever," (Isa. lix. 21.) Some worthy persons feel disconcerted, because, while the wicked murmur with impunity at the Word of God, they have not a clear proof at hand to silence them, forgetting that the Spirit is called an earnest and seal to confirm the faith of the godly, for this very reason, that, until he enlightens their minds, they are tossed to and fro in a sea of doubts.

5. Let it therefore be held as fixed, that those who are inwardly taught by the Holy Spirit acquiesce implicitly in Scripture; that Scripture carrying its own evidence along with it, deigns not to submit to proofs and arguments, but owes the full conviction with which we ought to receive it to the testimony of the Spirit.<sup>1</sup> Enlightened by him, we no longer believe, either on our own judgment or that of others, that the Scriptures are from God; but, in a way superior to human judgment, feel perfectly assured—as much so as if we beheld the divine image visibly impressed on it—that it came to us, by the instrumentality of men, from the very mouth of God. We ask not for proofs or probabilities on which to rest our judgment, but we subject our intellect and judgment to it as too transcendent for us to estimate. This, however, we do, not in the manner in which some are wont to fasten on an unknown object, which, as soon as known, displeases, but because we have a thorough conviction that, in holding it, we hold unassailable truth; not like miserable men, whose minds are enslaved by superstition, but because we feel a divine energy living and breathing in it—an energy by which we are drawn and animated to obey it, willingly indeed, and knowingly, but more vividly and effectually than could be done by human will or knowledge. Hence, God most justly exclaims by the mouth of Isaiah, "Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen, that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he," (Isa. xliii. 10.)

<sup>1</sup> The French adds, "Car jaçoit qu'en sa propre majesté elle ait assez de quoy estre reuerée, neantmoins elle commence lors à nous vrayement toucher, quand elle est scellée en nos cœurs par le Saint Esprit."—For though in its own majesty it has enough to command reverence, nevertheless, it then begins truly to touch us when it is sealed in our hearts by the Holy Spirit.

Such, then, is a conviction which asks not for reasons; such, a knowledge which accords with the highest reason, namely, knowledge in which the mind rests more firmly and securely than in any reasons; such, in fine, the conviction which revelation from heaven alone can produce. I say nothing more than every believer experiences in himself, though my words fall far short of the reality. I do not dwell on this subject at present, because we will return to it again: only let us now understand that the only true faith is that which the Spirit of God seals on our hearts. Nay, the modest and teachable reader will find a sufficient reason in the promise contained in Isaiah, that all the children of the renovated Church "shall be taught of the Lord," (Isaiah liv. 13.) This singular privilege God bestows on his elect only, whom he separates from the rest of mankind. For what is the beginning of true doctrine but prompt alacrity to hear the Word of God? And God, by the mouth of Moses, thus demands to be heard: "It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear and do it? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart," (Deut. xxx. 12, 14.) God having been pleased to reserve the treasure of intelligence for his children, no wonder that so much ignorance and stupidity is seen in the generality of mankind. In the *generality*, I include even those specially chosen, until they are ingrafted into the body of the Church. Isaiah, moreover, while reminding us that the prophetic doctrine would prove incredible not only to strangers, but also to the Jews, who were desirous to be thought of the household of God, subjoins the reason, when he asks, "To whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?" (Isaiah liii. 1.) If at any time, then, we are troubled at the small number of those who believe, let us, on the other hand, call to mind, that none comprehend the mysteries of God save those to whom it is given.

## CHAPTER VIII.

THE CREDIBILITY OF SCRIPTURE SUFFICIENTLY PROVED, IN  
SO FAR AS NATURAL REASON ADMITS.

This chapter consists of four parts. The first contains certain general proofs which may be easily gathered out of the writings both of the Old and New Testament, viz., the arrangement of the sacred volume, its dignity, truth, simplicity, efficacy, and majesty, sec. 1, 2. The second part contains special proofs taken from the Old Testament, viz., the antiquity of the books of Moses, their authority, his miracles and prophecies, sec. 3-7; also, the predictions of the other prophets and their wondrous harmony, sec. 8. There is subjoined a refutation of two objections to the books of Moses and the Prophets, sec. 9, 10. The third part exhibits proofs gathered out of the New Testament, *e. g.*, the harmony of the Evangelists in their account of heavenly mysteries, the majesty of the writings of John, Peter, and Paul, the remarkable calling of the Apostles and conversion of Paul, sec. 11. The last part exhibits the proofs drawn from ecclesiastical history, the perpetual consent of the Church in receiving and preserving divine truth, the invincible force of the truth in defending itself, the agreement of the godly, (though otherwise differing so much from one another,) the pious profession of the same doctrine by many illustrious men; in fine, the more than human constancy of the martyrs, sec. 12, 13. This is followed by a conclusion of the particular topic discussed.

*Sections.*

1. Secondary helps to establish the credibility of Scripture. I. The arrangement of the sacred volume. II. Its dignity. III. Its truth. IV. Its simplicity. V. Its efficacy.
2. The majesty conspicuous in the writings of the Prophets.
3. Special proofs from the Old Testament. I. The antiquity of the Books of Moses.
4. This antiquity contrasted with the dreams of the Egyptians. II. The majesty of the Books of Moses.
5. The miracles and prophecies of Moses. A profane objection refuted.
6. Another profane objection refuted.
7. The prophecies of Moses as to the sceptre not departing from Judah, and the calling of the Gentiles.
8. The predictions of other prophets. The destruction of Jerusalem;



and the return from the Babylonish captivity. Harmony of the Prophets. The celebrated prophecy of Daniel.

9. Objection against Moses and the Prophets. Answer to it.
10. Another objection and answer. Of the wondrous Providence of God in the preservation of the sacred books. The Greek Translation. The carefulness of the Jews.
11. Special proofs from the New Testament. I. The harmony of the Evangelists, and the sublime simplicity of their writings. II. The majesty of John, Paul, and Peter. III. The calling of the Apostles. IV. The conversion of Paul.
12. Proofs from Church history. I. Perpetual consent of the Church in receiving and preserving the truth. II. The invincible power of the truth itself. III. Agreement among the godly, notwithstanding of their many differences in other respects.
13. The constancy of the martyrs. Conclusion. Proofs of this description only of use after the certainty of Scripture has been established in the heart by the Holy Spirit.

1. IN vain were the authority of Scripture fortified by argument, or supported by the consent of the Church, or confirmed by any other helps, if unaccompanied by an assurance higher and stronger than human judgment can give. Till this better foundation has been laid, the authority of Scripture remains in suspense. On the other hand, when recognising its exemption from the common rule, we receive it reverently, and according to its dignity, those proofs which were not so strong as to produce and rivet a full conviction in our minds, become most appropriate helps. For it is wonderful how much we are confirmed in our belief, when we more attentively consider how admirably the system of divine wisdom contained in it is arranged—how perfectly free the doctrine is from every thing that savours of earth—how beautifully it harmonizes in all its parts—and how rich it is in all the other qualities which give an air of majesty to composition. Our hearts are still more firmly assured when we reflect that our admiration is excited more by the dignity of the matter than by the graces of style. For it was not without an admirable arrangement of Providence, that the sublime mysteries of the kingdom of heaven have for the greater part been delivered with a contemptible meanness of words. Had they been



adorned with a more splendid eloquence, the wicked might have cavilled, and alleged that this constituted all their force. But now, when an unpolished simplicity, almost bordering on rudeness, makes a deeper impression than the loftiest flights of oratory, what does it indicate if not that the Holy Scriptures are too mighty in the power of truth to need the rhetorician's art?

Hence there was good ground for the Apostle's declaration, that the faith of the Corinthians was founded not on "the wisdom of men," but on "the power of God," (1 Cor. ii. 5,)—his speech and preaching among them having been "not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power," (1 Cor. ii. 5.) For the truth is vindicated in opposition to every doubt, when, unsupported by foreign aid, it has its sole sufficiency in itself. How peculiarly this property belongs to Scripture appears from this, that no human writings, however skilfully composed, are at all capable of affecting us in a similar way. Read Demosthenes or Cicero, read Plato, Aristotle, or any other of that class: you will, I admit, feel wonderfully allured, pleased, moved, enchanted; but turn from them to the reading of the Sacred Volume, and whether you will or not, it will so affect you, so pierce your heart, so work its way into your very marrow, that, in comparison of the impression so produced, that of orators and philosophers will almost disappear; making it manifest that in the Sacred Volume there is a truth divine, a something which makes it immeasurably superior to all the gifts and graces attainable by man.

2. I confess, however, that in elegance and beauty, nay, splendour, the style of some of the prophets is not surpassed by the eloquence of heathen writers. By examples of this description, the Holy Spirit was pleased to show that it was not from want of eloquence he in other instances used a rude and homely style. But whether you read David, Isaiah, and others of the same class, whose discourse flows sweet and pleasant; or Amos the herdsman, Jeremiah, and Zechariah, whose rougher idiom savours of rusticity; that majesty of the Spirit to which I adverted appears conspicuous in all. I am not unaware, that as Satan

often apes God, that he may by a fallacious resemblance the better insinuate himself into the minds of the simple, so he craftily disseminated the impious errors with which he deceived miserable men in an uncouth and semi-barbarous style, and frequently employed obsolete forms of expression in order to cloak his impostures. None possessed of any moderate share of sense need be told how vain and vile such affectation is. But in regard to the Holy Scriptures, however petulant men may attempt to carp at them, they are replete with sentiments which it is clear that man never could have conceived. Let each of the prophets be examined, and not one will be found who does not rise far higher than human reach. Those who feel their works insipid must be absolutely devoid of taste.

3. As this subject has been treated at large by others, it will be sufficient here merely to touch on its leading points. In addition to the qualities already mentioned, great weight is due to the antiquity of Scripture, (Euseb. *Prepar. Evang.* lib. ii. c. i.) Whatever fables Greek writers may retail concerning the Egyptian Theology, no monument of any religion exists which is not long posterior to the age of Moses. But Moses does not introduce a new Deity. He only sets forth that doctrine concerning the eternal God which the Israelites had received by tradition from their fathers, by whom it had been transmitted, as it were, from hand to hand, during a long series of ages. For what else does he do than lead them back to the covenant which had been made with Abraham? Had he referred to matters of which they had never heard, he never could have succeeded; but their deliverance from the bondage in which they were held must have been a fact of familiar and universal notoriety, the very mention of which must have immediately aroused the attention of all. It is, moreover, probable, that they were intimately acquainted with the whole period of four hundred years. Now, if Moses (who is so much earlier than all other writers) traces the tradition of his doctrine from so remote a period, it is obvious how far the Holy Scriptures must in point of antiquity surpass all other writings.

4. Some perhaps may choose to credit the Egyptians in carrying back their antiquity to a period of six thousand years before the world was created. But their garrulity, which even some profane authors have held up to derision, it cannot be necessary for me to refute. Josephus, however, in his work against Appion, produces important passages from very ancient writers, implying that the doctrine delivered in the law was celebrated among all nations from the remotest ages, though it was neither read nor accurately known. And then, in order that the malignant might have no ground for suspicion, and the ungodly no handle for cavil, God has provided, in the most effectual manner, against both dangers. When Moses relates the words which Jacob, under Divine inspiration, uttered concerning his posterity almost three hundred years before, how does he ennoble his own tribe? He stigmatises it with eternal infamy in the person of Levi. "Simeon and Levi," says he, "are brethren; instruments of cruelty are in their habitations. O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly mine honour be not thou united," (Gen. xlix. 5, 6.) This stigma he certainly might have passed in silence, not only that he might spare his own ancestor, but also save both himself and his whole family from a portion of the disgrace. How can any suspicion attach to him, who, by voluntarily proclaiming that the first founder of his family was declared detestable by a Divine oracle, neither consults for his own private interest, nor declines to incur obloquy among his tribe, who must have been offended by his statement of the fact? Again, when he relates the wicked murmuring of his brother Aaron, and his sister Miriam, (Numb. xii. 1,) shall we say that he spoke his own natural feelings, or that he obeyed the command of the Holy Spirit? Moreover, when invested with supreme authority, why does he not bestow the office of High Priest on his sons, instead of consigning them to the lowest place? I only touch on a few points out of many; but the Law itself contains throughout numerous proofs, which fully vindicate the credibility of Moses, and place it beyond dispute, that he was in truth a messenger sent forth from God.



5. The many striking miracles which Moses relates are so many sanctions of the law delivered, and the doctrine propounded, by him.<sup>1</sup> His being carried up into the mount in a cloud; his remaining there forty days separated from human society; his countenance glistening during the promulgation of the law, as with meridian effulgence; the lightnings which flashed on every side; the voices and thunderings which echoed in the air; the clang of the trumpet blown by no human mouth; his entrance into the tabernacle, while a cloud hid him from the view of the people; the miraculous vindication of his authority, by the fearful destruction of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, and all their impious faction; the stream instantly gushing forth from the rock when struck with his rod; the manna which rained from heaven at his prayer;—did not God by all these proclaim aloud that he was an undoubted prophet? If any one object that I am taking debateable points for granted, the cavil is easily answered. Moses published all these things in the assembly of the people. How, then, could he possibly impose on the very eye-witnesses of what was done? Is it conceivable that he would have come forward, and, while accusing the people of unbelief, obstinacy, ingratitude, and other crimes, have boasted that his doctrine had been confirmed in their own presence by miracles which they never saw?

6. For it is also worthy of remark, that the miracles which he relates are combined with disagreeable circumstances, which must have provoked opposition from the whole body of the people, if there had been the smallest ground for it. Hence it is obvious that they were induced to assent, merely because they had been previously convinced by their own experience. But because the fact was too clear to leave it free for heathen writers to deny that Moses did perform miracles, the father of lies suggested a calumny, and ascribed them to magic, (Exod. ix. 11.) But with what probability is a charge of magic brought against him, who held it in such abhorrence, that he ordered every one who should consult soothsayers and magicians to be stoned? (Lev. xxx. 6.) As-

<sup>1</sup> Exod. xxiv. 18; xxxiv. 29; xix. 16; xl. 34. Numb. xvi. 24; xx. 10; xi. 9.



surely, no impostor deals in tricks, without studying to raise his reputation by amazing the common people. But what does Moses do? By crying out, that he and Aaron his brother are nothing, (Exod. xvi. 7,) that they merely execute what God has commanded, he clears himself from every approach to suspicion. Again, if the facts are considered in themselves, what kind of incantation could cause manna to rain from heaven every day, and in sufficient quantity to maintain a people, while any one, who gathered more than the appointed measure, saw his incredulity divinely punished by its turning to worms? To this we may add, that God then suffered his servant to be subjected to so many serious trials, that the ungodly cannot now gain anything by their clamour. When (as often happened) the people proudly and petulantly rose up against him, when individuals conspired, and attempted to overthrow him, how could any impostures have enabled him to elude their rage? The event plainly shows that by these means his doctrine was attested to all succeeding ages.

7. Moreover, it is impossible to deny that he was guided by a prophetic spirit in assigning the first place to the tribe of Judah in the person of Jacob, especially if we take into view the fact itself, as explained by the event. Suppose that Moses was the inventor of the prophecy, still, after he committed it to writing, four hundred years pass away, during which no mention is made of a sceptre in the tribe of Judah. After Saul is anointed, the kingly office seems fixed in the tribe of Benjamin, (1 Sam. xi. 15; xvi. 13.) When David is anointed by Samuel, what apparent ground is there for the transference? Who could have looked for a king out of the plebeian family of a herdsman? And out of seven brothers, who could have thought that the honour was destined for the youngest? And then by what means did he afterwards come within reach of the throne? Who dare say that his anointing was regulated by human art, or skill, or prudence, and was not rather the fulfilment of a divine prophecy? In like manner, do not the predictions, though obscure, of the admission of the Gentiles into the divine covenant, seeing they were not fulfilled till almost two thou-

sand years after, make it palpable that Moses spoke under divine inspiration? I omit other predictions which so plainly betoken divine revelation, that all men of sound mind must see they were spoken by God. In short, his Song itself (Deut. xxxii.) is a bright mirror in which God is manifestly seen.

8. In the case of the other prophets the evidence is even clearer. I will only select a few examples, for it were too tedious to enumerate the whole. Isaiah, in his own day, when the kingdom of Judah was at peace, and had even some ground to confide in the protection of the Chaldeans, spoke of the destruction of the city and the captivity of the people, (Isaiah xlv. 1.) Supposing it not to be sufficient evidence of divine inspiration to foretell, many years before, events which, at the time, seemed fabulous, but which ultimately turned out to be true, whence shall it be said that the prophecies which he uttered concerning their return proceeded, if it was not from God? He names Cyrus, by whom the Chaldeans were to be subdued and the people restored to freedom. After the prophet thus spoke, more than a hundred years elapsed before Cyrus was born, that being nearly the period which elapsed between the death of the one and the birth of the other. It was impossible at that time to guess that some Cyrus would arise to make war on the Babylonians, and after subduing their powerful monarchy, put an end to the captivity of the children of Israel. Does not this simple, unadorned narrative plainly demonstrate that what Isaiah spoke was not the conjecture of man, but the undoubted oracle of God? Again, when Jeremiah, a considerable time before the people were led away, assigned seventy years as the period of captivity, and fixed their liberation and return, must not his tongue have been guided by the Spirit of God? What effrontery were it to deny that, by these evidences, the authority of the prophets is established, the very thing being fulfilled to which they appeal in support of their credibility! "Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare; before they spring forth I tell you of them," (Isaiah xlii. 9.) I say nothing of

the agreement between Jeremiah and Ezekiel, who, living so far apart, and yet prophesying at the same time, harmonize as completely in all they say as if they had mutually dictated the words to one another. What shall I say of Daniel? Did not he deliver prophecies embracing a future period of almost six hundred years, as if he had been writing of past events generally known? (Dan. ix. &c.) If the pious will duly meditate on these things, they will be sufficiently instructed to silence the cavils of the ungodly. The demonstration is too clear to be gainsayed.

9. I am aware of what is muttered in corners by certain miscreants, when they would display their acuteness in assailing divine truth. They ask, how do we know that Moses and the prophets wrote the books which now bear their names? Nay, they even dare to question whether there ever was a Moses. Were any one to question whether there ever was a Plato, or an Aristotle, or a Cicero, would not the rod or the whip be deemed the fit chastisement of such folly? The law of Moses has been wonderfully preserved, more by divine providence than by human care; and though, owing to the negligence of the priests, it lay for a short time buried,—from the time when it was found by good King Josiah, (2 Kings xxii. 8; 2 Chron. xxxiv. 15,)—it has continued in the hands of men, and been transmitted in unbroken succession from generation to generation. Nor, indeed, when Josiah brought it forth, was it as a book unknown or new, but one which had always been matter of notoriety, and was then in full remembrance. The original writing had been deposited in the temple, and a copy taken from it had been deposited in the royal archives, (Deut. xvii. 18, 19;) the only thing which had occurred was, that the priests had ceased to publish the law itself in due form, and the people also had neglected the wonted reading of it. I may add, that scarcely an age passed during which its authority was not confirmed and renewed. Were the books of Moses unknown to those who had the Psalms of David in their hands? To sum up the whole in one word, it is certain beyond dispute, that these writings passed down, if I may so express it, from hand to hand, being transmitted in an



unbroken series from the fathers, who either with their own ears heard them spoken, or learned them from those who had, while the remembrance of them was fresh.

10. An objection taken from the history of the Maccabees (1 Maccab. i. 57, 58) to impugn the credibility of Scripture, is, on the contrary, fitted the best possible to confirm it. First, however, let us clear away the gloss which is put upon it: having done so, we shall turn the engine which they erect against us upon themselves. As Antiochus ordered all the books of Scripture to be burnt, it is asked, where did the copies we now have come from? I, in my turn, ask, In what workshop could they have been so quickly fabricated? It is certain that they were in existence the moment the persecution ceased, and that they were acknowledged without dispute by all the pious who had been educated in their doctrine, and were familiarly acquainted with them. Nay, while all the wicked so wantonly insulted the Jews as if they had leagued together for the purpose, not one ever dared to charge them with having introduced spurious books. Whatever, in their opinion, the Jewish religion might be, they acknowledged that Moses was the founder of it. What, then, do those babblers, but betray their snarling petulance in falsely alleging the spuriousness of books whose sacred antiquity is proved by the consent of all history? But not to spend labour in vain in refuting these vile calumnies, let us rather attend to the care which the Lord took to preserve his Word, when against all hope he rescued it from the truculence of a most cruel tyrant as from the midst of the flames—inspiring pious priests and others with such constancy that they hesitated not, though it should have been purchased at the expense of their lives, to transmit this treasure to posterity, and defeating the keenest search of prefects and their satellites.

Who does not recognise it as a signal and miraculous work of God, that those sacred monuments which the ungodly persuaded themselves had utterly perished, immediately returned to resume their former rights, and, indeed, in greater honour? For the Greek translation appeared to disseminate them over the whole world. Nor does it seem so



wonderful that God rescued the tables of his covenant from the sanguinary edicts of Antiochus, as that they remained safe and entire amid the manifold disasters by which the Jewish nation was occasionally crushed, devastated, and almost exterminated. The Hebrew language was in no estimation, and almost unknown; and assuredly, had not God provided for religion, it must have utterly perished. For it is obvious from the prophetical writings of that age, how much the Jews, after their return from the captivity, had lost the genuine use of their native tongue. It is of importance to attend to this, because the comparison more clearly establishes the antiquity of the Law and the Prophets. And whom did God employ to preserve the doctrine of salvation contained in the Law and the Prophets, that Christ might manifest it in its own time? The Jews, the bitterest enemies of Christ; and hence Augustine justly calls them the librarians of the Christian Church, because they supplied us with books of which they themselves had not the use.

11. When we proceed to the New Testament, how solid are the pillars by which its truth is supported! Three evangelists give a narrative in a mean and humble style. The proud often eye this simplicity with disdain, because they attend not to the principal heads of doctrine; for from these they might easily infer that these evangelists treat of heavenly mysteries beyond the capacity of man. Those who have the least particle of candour must be ashamed of their fastidiousness when they read the first chapter of Luke. Even our Saviour's discourses, of which a summary is given by these three evangelists, ought to prevent every one from treating their writings with contempt. John, again, fulminating in majesty, strikes down more powerfully than any thunderbolt the petulance of those who refuse to submit to the obedience of faith. Let all those acute censors, whose highest pleasure it is to banish a reverential regard of Scripture from their own and other men's hearts, come forward; let them read the Gospel of John, and, willing or unwilling, they will find a thousand sentences which will at least arouse them from their sloth; nay, which will burn into their consciences as with a hot iron, and check their deri-

sion. The same thing may be said of Peter and Paul, whose writings, though the greater part read them blindfold, exhibit a heavenly majesty, which in a manner binds and rivets every reader. But one circumstance, sufficient of itself to exalt their doctrine above the world, is, that Matthew, who was formerly fixed down to his money-table, Peter and John, who were employed with their little boats, being all rude and illiterate, had never learned in any human school that which they delivered to others. Paul, moreover, who had not only been an avowed but a cruel and bloody foe, being changed into a new man, shows, by the sudden and unhopd-for change, that a heavenly power had compelled him to preach the doctrine which once he destroyed. Let those dogs deny that the Holy Spirit descended upon the apostles, or, if not, let them refuse credit to the history, still the very circumstances proclaim that the Holy Spirit must have been the teacher of those who, formerly contemptible among the people, all of a sudden began to discourse so magnificently of heavenly mysteries.

12. Add, moreover, that, for the best of reasons, the consent of the Church is not without its weight. For it is not to be accounted of no consequence, that, from the first publication of Scripture, so many ages have uniformly concurred in yielding obedience to it, and that, notwithstanding of the many extraordinary attempts which Satan and the whole world have made to oppress and overthrow it, or completely efface it from the memory of men, it has flourished like the palm tree and continued invincible. Though in old times there was scarcely a sophist or orator of any note who did not exert his powers against it, their efforts proved unavailing. The powers of the earth armed themselves for its destruction, but all their attempts vanished into smoke. When thus powerfully assailed on every side, how could it have resisted if it had trusted only to human aid? Nay, its divine origin is more completely established by the fact, that when all human wishes were against it, it advanced by its own energy. Add that it was not a single city or a single nation that concurred in receiving and embracing it. Its authority was recognised as far and as wide as the world

extends—various nations who had nothing else in common entering for this purpose into a holy league. Moreover, while we ought to attach the greatest weight to the agreement of minds so diversified, and in all other things so much at variance with each other—an agreement which a Divine Providence alone could have produced—it adds no small weight to the whole when we attend to the piety of those who thus agree; not of all of them indeed, but of those in whom as lights God was pleased that his Church should shine.

13. Again, with what confidence does it become us to subscribe to a doctrine attested and confirmed by the blood of so many saints? They, when once they had embraced it, hesitated not boldly and intrepidly, and even with great alacrity, to meet death in its defence. Being transmitted to us with such an earnest, who of us shall not receive it with firm and unshaken conviction? It is therefore no small proof of the authority of Scripture, that it was sealed with the blood of so many witnesses, especially when it is considered that in bearing testimony to the faith, they met death not with fanatical enthusiasm, (as erring spirits are sometimes wont to do,) but with a firm and constant, yet sober godly zeal. There are other reasons, neither few nor feeble, by which the dignity and majesty of the Scriptures may be not only proved to the pious, but also completely vindicated against the cavils of slanderers. These, however, cannot of themselves produce a firm faith in Scripture until our heavenly Father manifest his presence in it, and thereby secure implicit reverence for it. Then only, therefore, does Scripture suffice to give a saving knowledge of God when its certainty is founded on the inward persuasion of the Holy Spirit. Still the human testimonies which go to confirm it will not be without effect, if they are used in subordination to that chief and highest proof, as secondary helps to our weakness. But it is foolish to attempt to prove to infidels that the Scripture is the Word of God. This it cannot be known to be, except by faith. Justly, therefore, does Augustine remind us, that every man who would have any understanding in such high matters must previously possess piety and mental peace.



## CHAPTER IX.

ALL THE PRINCIPLES OF PIETY SUBVERTED BY FANATICS,  
WHO SUBSTITUTE REVELATIONS FOR SCRIPTURE.

*Sections.*

1. The temper and error of the Libertines, who take to themselves the name of spiritual, briefly described. Their refutation. 1. The Apostles and all true Christians have embraced the written Word. This confirmed by a passage in Isaiah ; also by the example and words of Paul. 2. The Spirit of Christ seals the doctrine of the written Word on the minds of the godly.
2. Refutation continued. 3. The impositions of Satan cannot be detected without the aid of the written Word. First Objection. The Answer to it.
3. Second Objection from the words of Paul as to the *letter and spirit*. The Answer, with an explanation of Paul's meaning. How the Spirit and the written Word are indissolubly connected.

1. THOSE who, rejecting Scripture, imagine that they have some peculiar way of penetrating to God, are to be deemed not so much under the influence of error as madness. For certain giddy men<sup>1</sup> have lately appeared, who, while they make a great display of the superiority of the Spirit, reject all reading of the Scriptures themselves, and deride the simplicity of those who only delight in what they call the dead and deadly letter. But I wish they would tell me what spirit it is whose inspiration raises them to such a sublime height that they dare despise the doctrine of Scripture as mean and childish. If they answer that it is the Spirit of Christ, their confidence is exceedingly ridiculous ; since they will, I presume, admit that the apostles and other believers in the primitive Church were not illuminated by any other Spirit. None of these thereby learned to despise the word of

<sup>1</sup> Lactantius : Cœlestes literas corruperunt, ut novam sibi doctrinam sine ulla radice ac stabilitate componerent. *Vide* Calvin in *Instruct. adv. Libertinos*, cap. ix. and x.



God, but every one was imbued with greater reverence for it, as their writings most clearly testify. And, indeed, it had been so foretold by the mouth of Isaiah. For when he says, "My Spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever," he does not tie down the ancient Church to external doctrine, as he were a mere teacher of elements;<sup>1</sup> he rather shows that, under the reign of Christ, the true and full felicity of the new Church will consist in their being ruled not less by the Word than by the Spirit of God. Hence we infer that these miscreants are guilty of fearful sacrilege in tearing asunder what the prophet joins in indissoluble union. Add to this, that Paul, though carried up even to the third heaven, ceased not to profit by the doctrine of the law and the prophets, while, in like manner, he exhorts Timothy, a teacher of singular excellence, to give attention to reading, (1 Tim. iv. 13.) And the eulogium which he pronounces on Scripture well deserves to be remembered, viz., that "it is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect," (2 Tim. iii. 16.) What an infatuation of the devil, therefore, to fancy that Scripture, which conducts the sons of God to the final goal, is of transient and temporary use? Again, I should like those people to tell me whether they have imbibed any other Spirit than that which Christ promised to his disciples. Though their madness is extreme, it will scarcely carry them the length of making this their boast. But what kind of Spirit did our Saviour promise to send? One who should not speak of himself, (John xvi. 13,) but suggest and instil the truths which he himself had delivered through the word. Hence the office of the Spirit promised to us, is not to form new and unheard-of revelations, or to coin a new form of doctrine, by which we may be led away

<sup>1</sup> For the Latin, "ac si elementarius esset," the French has, "comme s'ils eussent été petits enfans a l'A, B, C;"—as if they were little children at their A, B, C.

from the received doctrine of the gospel, but to seal on our minds the very doctrine which the gospel recommends.

2. Hence it is easy to understand that we must give diligent heed both to the reading and hearing of Scripture, if we would obtain any benefit from the Spirit of God, (just as Peter praises those who attentively study the doctrine of the prophets, (2 Pet. i. 19,) though it might have been thought to be superseded after the gospel light arose,) and, on the contrary, that any spirit which passes by the wisdom of God's Word, and suggests any other doctrine, is deservedly suspected of vanity and falsehood. Since Satan transforms himself into an angel of light, what authority can the Spirit have with us if he be not ascertained by an infallible mark? And assuredly he is pointed out to us by the Lord with sufficient clearness; but these miserable men err as if bent on their own destruction, while they seek the Spirit from themselves rather than from Him. But they say that it is insulting to subject the Spirit, to whom all things are to be subject, to the Scripture: as if it were disgraceful to the Holy Spirit to maintain a perfect resemblance throughout, and be in all respects without variation consistent with himself. True, if he were subjected to a human, an angelical, or to any foreign standard, it might be thought that he was rendered subordinate, or, if you will, brought into bondage; but so long as he is compared with himself, and considered in himself, how can it be said that he is thereby injured? I admit that he is brought to a test, but the very test by which it has pleased him that his majesty should be confirmed. It ought to be enough for us when once we hear his voice; but lest Satan should insinuate himself under his name, he wishes us to recognise him by the image which he has stamped on the Scriptures. The author of the Scriptures cannot vary, and change his likeness. Such as he there appeared at first, such he will perpetually remain. There is nothing contumelious to him in this, unless we are to think it would be honourable for him to degenerate, and revolt against himself.

3. Their cavil about our cleaving to the dead letter carries

with it the punishment which they deserve for despising Scripture. It is clear that Paul is there arguing against false apostles, (2 Cor. iii. 6,) who, by recommending the law without Christ, deprived the people of the benefit of the New Covenant, by which the Lord engages that he will write his law on the hearts of believers, and engrave it on their inward parts. The letter therefore is dead, and the law of the Lord kills its readers when it is dis severed from the grace of Christ, and only sounds in the ear without touching the heart. But if it is effectually impressed on the heart by the Spirit; if it exhibits Christ, it is the word of life converting the soul, and making wise the simple. Nay, in the very same passage, the apostle calls his own preaching the ministration of the Spirit, (2 Cor. iii. 8,) intimating that the Holy Spirit so cleaves to his own truth, as he has expressed it in Scripture, that he then only exerts and puts forth his strength when the word is received with due honour and respect.

There is nothing repugnant here to what was lately said, (chap. vii.) that we have no great certainty of the word itself, until it be confirmed by the testimony of the Spirit. For the Lord has so knit together the certainty of his word and his Spirit, that our minds are duly imbued with reverence for the word when the Spirit shining upon it enables us there to behold the face of God; and, on the other hand, we embrace the Spirit with no danger of delusion when we recognise him in his image, that is, in his word. Thus, indeed, it is. God did not produce his word before men for the sake of sudden display, intending to abolish it the moment the Spirit should arrive; but he employed the same Spirit, by whose agency he had administered the word, to complete his work by the efficacious confirmation of the word. In this way Christ explained to the two disciples, (Luke xxiv. 27,) not that they were to reject the Scriptures and trust to their own wisdom, but that they were to understand the Scriptures. In like manner, when Paul says to the Thessalonians, "Quench not the Spirit," he does not carry them aloft to empty speculation apart from the word; he immediately adds, "Despise not prophesyings," (1 Thess. v.

19, 20.) By this, doubtless, he intimates that the light of the Spirit is quenched the moment prophesyings fall into contempt. How is this answered by those swelling enthusiasts, in whose idea the only true illumination consists, in carelessly laying aside, and bidding adieu to the Word of God, while, with no less confidence than folly, they fasten upon any dreaming notion which may have casually sprung up in their minds? Surely a very different sobriety becomes the children of God. As they feel that without the Spirit of God they are utterly devoid of the light of truth, so they are not ignorant that the word is the instrument by which the illumination of the Spirit is dispensed. They know of no other Spirit than the one who dwelt and spake in the apostles—the Spirit by whose oracles they are daily invited to the hearing of the word.



## CHAPTER X.

IN SCRIPTURE, THE TRUE GOD OPPOSED, EXCLUSIVELY, TO  
ALL THE GODS OF THE HEATHEN.

*Sections.*

1. Explanation of the knowledge of God resumed. God as manifested in Scripture, the same as delineated in his works.
2. The attributes of God as described by Moses, David, and Jeremiah. Explanation of the attributes. Summary. Uses of this knowledge.
3. Scripture, in directing us to the true God, excludes the gods of the heathen, who, however, in some sense, held the unity of God.

1. WE formerly observed that the knowledge of God, which, in other respects, is not obscurely exhibited in the frame of the world, and in all the creatures, is more clearly and familiarly explained by the word. It may now be proper to show, that in Scripture the Lord represents himself in the same character in which we have already seen that he is delineated in his works. A full discussion of this subject would occupy a large space. But it will here be sufficient to furnish a kind of index, by attending to which the pious reader may be enabled to understand what knowledge of God he ought chiefly to search for in Scripture, and be directed as to the mode of conducting the search. I am not now adverting to the peculiar covenant by which God distinguished the race of Abraham from the rest of the nations. For when by gratuitous adoption he admitted those who were enemies to the rank of sons, he even then acted in the character of a Redeemer. At present, however, we are employed in considering that knowledge which stops short at the creation of the world, without ascending to Christ the Mediator. But though it will soon be necessary to quote certain passages from the New Testament, (proofs being there given both of the power of God the Creator, and of his providence in the preservation of what he originally created,) I wish

the reader to remember what my present purpose is, that he may not wander from the proper subject. Briefly, then, it will be sufficient for him at present to understand how God, the Creator of heaven and earth, governs the world which was made by him. In every part of Scripture we meet with descriptions of his paternal kindness and readiness to do good, and we also meet with examples of severity which show that he is the just punisher of the wicked, especially when they continue obstinate notwithstanding of all his forbearance.

2. There are certain passages which contain more vivid descriptions of the divine character, setting it before us as if his genuine countenance were visibly portrayed. Moses, indeed, seems to have intended briefly to comprehend whatever may be known of God by man, when he said, "The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation," (Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7.) Here we may observe, *first*, that his eternity and self-existence are declared by his magnificent name twice repeated; and, *secondly*, that in the enumeration of his perfections, he is described not as he is in himself, but in relation to us, in order that our acknowledgment of him may be more a vivid actual impression than empty visionary speculation. Moreover, the perfections thus enumerated are just those which we saw shining in the heavens, and on the earth—compassion, goodness, mercy, justice, judgment, and truth. For power and energy are comprehended under the name Jehovah. Similar epithets are employed by the prophets when they would fully declare his sacred name. Not to collect a great number of passages, it may suffice at present to refer to one Psalm, (cxlv.) in which a summary of the divine perfections is so carefully given, that not one seems to have been omitted. Still, however, every perfection there set down may be contemplated in creation; and, hence, such as we feel him to be when experience is our guide, such he declares himself to be by his word. In

Jeremiah, where God proclaims the character in which he would have us to acknowledge him, though the description is not so full, it is substantially the same. "Let him that glorieth," says he, "glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth," (Jerem. ix. 24.) Assuredly, the attributes which it is most necessary for us to know are these three: Loving-kindness, on which alone our entire safety depends: Judgment, which is daily exercised on the wicked, and awaits them in a severer form, even for eternal destruction: Righteousness, by which the faithful are preserved, and most benignly cherished. The prophet declares, that when you understand these, you are amply furnished with the means of glorying in God. Nor is there here any omission of his truth, or power, or holiness, or goodness. For how could this knowledge of his loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness, exist, if it were not founded on his inviolable truth? How, again, could it be believed that he governs the earth with judgment and righteousness, without presupposing his mighty power? Whence, too, his loving-kindness, but from his goodness? In fine, if all his ways are loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness, his holiness also is thereby conspicuous. Moreover, the knowledge of God, which is set before us in the Scriptures, is designed for the same purpose as that which shines in creation, viz., that we may thereby learn to worship him with perfect integrity of heart and unfeigned obedience, and also to depend entirely on his goodness.

3. Here it may be proper to give a summary of the general doctrine. First, then, let the reader observe that the Scripture, in order to direct us to the true God, distinctly excludes and rejects all the gods of the heathen, because religion was universally adulterated in almost every age. It is true, indeed, that the name of one God was everywhere known and celebrated. For those who worshipped a multitude of gods, whenever they spoke the genuine language of nature, simply used the name god, as if they had thought one god sufficient. And this is shrewdly noticed by Justin Martyr, who, to the same effect, wrote a treatise, entitled, *On the Monarchy of*



God, in which he shows, by a great variety of evidence, that the unity of God is engraven on the hearts of all. Tertullian also proves the same thing from the common forms of speech.<sup>1</sup> But as all, without exception, have in the vanity of their minds rushed or been dragged into lying fictions, these impressions, as to the unity of God, whatever they may have naturally been, have had no further effect than to render men inexcusable. The wisest plainly discover the vague wanderings of their minds when they express a wish for any kind of Deity, and thus offer up their prayers to unknown gods. And then, in imagining a manifold nature in God, though their ideas concerning Jupiter, Mercury, Venus, Minerva, and others, were not so absurd as those of the rude vulgar, they were by no means free from the delusions of the devil. We have elsewhere observed, that however subtle the evasions devised by philosophers, they cannot do away with the charge of rebellion, in that all of them have corrupted the truth of God. For this reason, Habakkuk, (ii. 20,) after condemning all idols, orders men to seek God in his temple, that the faithful may acknowledge none but Him, who has manifested himself in his word.

<sup>1</sup> In his book, *De Idolatria*. See also in Augustine, a letter by one Maximus, a grammarian of Medaura, jesting at his gods, and scoffing at the true religion. See, at the same time, Augustine's grave and admirable reply. Ep. xliii. xlv.



## CHAPTER XI.

IMPIETY OF ATTRIBUTING A VISIBLE FORM TO GOD.—THE  
SETTING UP OF IDOLS A DEFECTION FROM THE TRUE  
GOD.

There are three leading divisions in this chapter. The first contains a refutation of those who ascribe a visible form to God, (s. 1 and 2,) with an answer to the objection of those who, because it is said that God manifested his presence by certain symbols, use it as a defence of their error, (s. 3 and 4.) Various arguments are afterwards adduced, disposing of the trite objection from Gregory's expression, that images are the books of the unlearned, (s. 5-7.) The second division of the chapter relates to the origin of idols or images, and the adoration of them, as approved by the Papists, (s. 8-10.) Their evasion refuted, (s. 11.) The third division treats of the use and abuse of images, (s. 12.) Whether it is expedient to have them in Christian Churches, (s. 13.) The concluding part contains a refutation of the second Council of Nice, which very absurdly contends for images in opposition to divine truth, and even to the disparagement of the Christian name.

*Sections.*

1. God is opposed to idols, that all may know he is the only fit witness to himself. He expressly forbids any attempt to represent him by a bodily shape.
2. Reasons for this prohibition from Moses, Isaiah, and Paul. The complaint of a heathen. It should put the worshippers of idols to shame.
3. Consideration of an objection taken from various passages in Moses. The Cherubim and Seraphim show that images are not fit to represent divine mysteries. The Cherubim belonged to the tutelage of the Law.
4. The materials of which idols are made, abundantly refute the fiction of idolaters. Confirmation from Isaiah and others. Absurd precaution of the Greeks.
5. Objection,—That images are the books of the unlearned. Objection answered, 1. Scripture declares images to be teachers of vanity and lies.
6. Answer continued,—2. Ancient Theologians condemn the formation and worship of idols.

7. Answer continued,—3. The use of images condemned by the luxury and meretricious ornaments given to them in Popish Churches.
4. The Church must be trained in true piety by another method.
8. The second division of the chapter. Origin of idols or images. Its rise shortly after the flood. Its continual progress.
9. Of the worship of images. Its nature. A pretext of idolaters refuted. Pretexts of the heathen. Genius of idolaters.
10. Evasion of the Papists. Their agreement with ancient idolaters.
11. Refutation of another evasion or sophism, viz., the distinction of *dulia* and *latria*.
12. Third division of the chapter, viz., the use and abuse of images.
13. Whether it is expedient to have images in Christian temples.
14. Absurd defence of the worship of images by the second so-called Council of Nice. Sophisms or perversions of Scripture in defence of images in churches.
15. Passages adduced in support of the worship of images.
16. The blasphemous expressions of some ancient idolaters approved by not a few of the more modern, both in word and deed.

1. As Scripture, in accommodation to the rude and gross intellect of man, usually speaks in popular terms, so whenever its object is to discriminate between the true God and false deities, it opposes him in particular to idols; not that it approves of what is taught more elegantly and subtilely by philosophers, but that it may the better expose the folly, nay, madness of the world in its inquiries after God, so long as every one clings to his own speculations. This exclusive definition, which we uniformly meet with in Scripture, annihilates every deity which men frame for themselves of their own accord—God himself being the only fit witness to himself. Meanwhile, seeing that this brutish stupidity has overspread the globe, men longing after visible forms of God, and so forming deities of wood and stone, silver and gold, or of any other dead and corruptible matter, we must hold it as a first principle, that as often as any form is assigned to God, his glory is corrupted by an impious lie. In the Law, accordingly, after God had claimed the glory of divinity for himself alone, when he comes to show what kind of worship he approves and rejects, he immediately adds, “Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the water under the earth,” (Exod. xx. 4.) By

these words he curbs any licentious attempt we might make to represent him by a visible shape, and briefly enumerates all the forms by which superstition had begun, even long before, to turn his truth into a lie. For we know that the Sun was worshipped by the Persians. As many stars as the foolish nations saw in the sky, so many gods they imagined them to be. Then to the Egyptians, every animal was a figure of God.<sup>1</sup> The Greeks, again, plumed themselves on their superior wisdom in worshipping God under the human form, (Maximus Tyrius Platonic. Serm. 38.) But God makes no comparison between images, as if one were more, and another less befitting; he rejects, without exception, all shapes and pictures, and other symbols by which the superstitious imagine they can bring him near to them.

2. This may easily be inferred from the reasons which he annexes to his prohibition. First, it is said in the books of Moses, (Deut. iv. 15,) "Take ye therefore good heed unto yourselves; for ye saw no manner of similitude in the day that the Lord spake unto you in Horeb, out of the midst of the fire, lest ye corrupt yourselves, and make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure," &c. We see how plainly God declares against all figures, to make us aware that all longing after such visible shapes is rebellion against him. Of the prophets, it will be sufficient to mention Isaiah, who is the most copious on this subject, (Isaiah xl. 18; xli. 7, 29; xlv. 9; xlvi. 5,) in order to show how the majesty of God is defiled by an absurd and indecorous fiction, when he who is incorporeal is assimilated to corporeal matter; he who is invisible to a visible image; he who is a spirit to an inanimate object; and he who fills all space to a bit of paltry wood, or stone, or gold. Paul, too, reasons in the same way, "Forasmuch, then, as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device," (Acts xvii. 29.) Hence it is manifest, that whatever statues are set up or pictures painted to represent God, are utterly displeasing to him, as a kind of insults to his majesty. And is it strange that the Holy

<sup>1</sup> The French adds, "voire jusques aux oignons et porreaux;"—they have gone even to onions and leeks.



Spirit thunders such responses from heaven, when he compels even blind and miserable idolaters to make a similar confession on the earth? Seneca's complaint, as given by Augustine, *De Civit. Dei*, c. 10, is well known. He says, "The sacred, immortal, and invisible gods, they exhibit in the meanest and most ignoble materials, and dress them in the clothing of men and beasts; some confound the sexes, and form a compound out of different bodies, giving the name of deities to objects, which, if they were met alive, would be deemed monsters." Hence, again, it is obvious, that the defenders of images resort to a paltry quibbling evasion, when they pretend that the Jews were forbidden to use them on account of their proneness to superstition; as if a prohibition which the Lord founds on his own eternal essence, and the uniform course of nature, could be restricted to a single nation. Besides, when Paul refuted the error of giving a bodily shape to God, he was addressing not Jews, but Athenians.

3. It is true that the Lord occasionally manifested his presence by certain signs, so that he was said to be seen face to face; but all the signs he ever employed were in apt accordance with the scheme of doctrine, and, at the same time, gave plain intimation of his incomprehensible essence. For the cloud, and smoke, and flame, though they were symbols of heavenly glory, (*Deut. iv. 11.*) curbed men's minds as with a bridle, that they might not attempt to penetrate farther. Therefore, even Moses (to whom, of all men, God manifested himself most familiarly) was not permitted, though he prayed for it, to behold that face, but received for answer, that the refulgence was too great for man, (*Exod. xxxiii. 20.*) The Holy Spirit appeared under the form of a dove, but as it instantly vanished, who does not see that in this symbol of a moment, the faithful were admonished to regard the Spirit as invisible, to be contented with his power and grace, and not call for any external figure? God sometimes appeared in the form of a man, but this was in anticipation of the future revelation in Christ, and, therefore, did not give the Jews the least pretext for setting up a symbol of Deity under the human form. The mercy-seat, also, (*Exod. xxv. 17, 18, 21.*) where, under the



Law, God exhibited the presence of his power, was so framed, as to intimate that God is best seen when the mind rises in admiration above itself: the Cherubim with outstretched wings shaded, and the veil covered it, while the remoteness of the place was in itself a sufficient concealment. It is therefore mere infatuation to attempt to defend images of God and the saints by the example of the Cherubim. For what, pray, did these figures mean, if not that images are unfit to represent the mysteries of God, since they were so formed as to cover the mercy-seat with their wings, thereby concealing the view of God, not only from the eye, but from every human sense, and curbing presumption? To this we may add, that the prophets depict the Seraphim, who are exhibited to us in vision, as having their faces veiled; thus intimating, that the refulgence of the divine glory is so great, that even the angels cannot gaze upon it directly, while the minute beams which sparkle in the face of angels are shrouded from our view. Moreover, all men of sound judgment acknowledge that the Cherubim in question belonged to the old tutelage of the law. It is absurd, therefore, to bring them forward as an example for our age. For that period of puerility, if I may so express it, to which such rudiments were adapted, has passed away. And surely it is disgraceful, that heathen writers should be more skilful interpreters of Scripture than the Papists. Juvenal (Sat. xiv.) holds up the Jews to derision for worshipping the thin clouds and firmament. This he does perversely and impiously; still, in denying that any visible shape of Deity existed among them, he speaks more accurately than the Papists, who prate about there having been some visible image. In the fact that the people every now and then rushed forth with boiling haste in pursuit of idols, just like water gushing forth with violence from a copious spring, let us learn how prone our nature is to idolatry, that we may not, by throwing the whole blame of a common vice upon the Jews, be led away by vain and sinful enticements to sleep the sleep of death.

4. To the same effect are the words of the Psalmist, (Psalms cxv. 4, cxxxv. 15,) "Their idols are silver and

gold, the works of men's hands." From the materials of which they are made, he infers that they are not gods, taking it for granted that every human device concerning God is a dull fiction. He mentions silver and gold rather than clay or stone, that neither splendour nor cost may procure reverence to idols. He then draws a general conclusion, that nothing is more unlikely than that gods should be formed of any kind of inanimate matter. Man is forced to confess that he is but the creature of a day, (see Book III. c. ix. s. 2,) and yet would have the metal which he has deified to be regarded as God. Whence had idols their origin, but from the will of man? There was ground, therefore, for the sarcasm of the heathen poet, (Hor. Sat. I. 8,) "I was once the trunk of a fig-tree, a useless log, when the tradesman, uncertain whether he should make me a stool, &c., chose rather that I should be a god." In other words, an earth-born creature, who breathes out his life almost every moment, is able by his own device to confer the name and honour of deity on a lifeless trunk. But as that Epicurean poet, in indulging his wit, had no regard for religion, without attending to his jeers or those of his fellows, let the rebuke of the prophet sting, nay, cut us to the heart, when he speaks of the extreme infatuation of those who take a piece of wood to kindle a fire to warm themselves, bake bread, roast or boil flesh, and out of the residue make a god, before which they prostrate themselves as suppliants, (Isaiah xlv. 16.) Hence, the same prophet, in another place, not only charges idolaters as guilty in the eye of the law, but upbraids them for not learning from the foundations of the earth, nothing being more incongruous than to reduce the immense and incomprehensible Deity to the stature of a few feet. And yet experience shows that this monstrous proceeding, though palpably repugnant to the order of nature, is natural to man. It is, moreover, to be observed, that by the mode of expression which is employed, every form of superstition is denounced. Being works of men, they have no authority from God, (Isa. ii. 8, 31; vii. 57; Hos. xiv. 4; Mic. v. 13;) and, therefore, it must be regarded as a fixed principle, that all modes of worship devised by

man are detestable. The infatuation is placed in a still stronger light by the Psalmist, (Psalm cxv. 8,) when he shows how aid is implored from dead and senseless objects, by beings who have been endued with intelligence for the very purpose of enabling them to know that the whole universe is governed by Divine energy alone. But as the corruption of nature hurries away all mankind collectively and individually into this madness, the Spirit at length thunders forth a dreadful imprecation, "They that make them are like unto them, so is every one that trusteth in them."<sup>1</sup> And it is to be observed, that the thing forbidden is *likeness*, whether sculptured or otherwise. This disposes of the frivolous precaution taken by the Greek Church. They think they do admirably, because they have no sculptured shape of Deity, while none go greater lengths in the licentious use of pictures. The Lord, however, not only forbids any image of himself to be erected by a statuary, but to be formed by any artist whatever, because every such image is sinful and insulting to his majesty.

5. I am not ignorant, indeed, of the assertion, which is now more than threadbare, "that images are the books of the unlearned." So said Gregory:<sup>2</sup> but the Holy Spirit gives a very different decision; and had Gregory got his lesson in this matter in the Spirit's school, he never would have spoken as he did. For when Jeremiah declares that "the stock is a doctrine of vanities," (Jer. x. 8,) and Habakkuk, "that the molten image" is "a teacher of lies," the general doctrine to be inferred certainly is, that every thing respecting God which is learned from images is futile and false. If it is objected that the censure of the prophets is directed against those who perverted images to purposes of impious superstition, I admit it to be so; but I add, (what must be obvious to all,) that the prophets utterly condemn what the Papists hold to be an undoubted axiom, viz., that images are

<sup>1</sup> Calvin translates the words of the Psalmist as an imprecation, "Similes illis fiant qui faciunt ea;"—Let those who make them be like unto them.

<sup>2</sup> See Gregory, Ep. ad Serenum Massiliens, Ep. cix. lib. vii.; and Ep. ix. lib. ix.; also Ep. liii. et cxxvi. lib. ii., where Gregory, while wishing to excuse the worship of images, rather accuses it.



substitutes for books. For they contrast images with the true God, as if the two were of an opposite nature, and never could be made to agree. In the passages which I lately quoted, the conclusion drawn is, that seeing there is one true God whom the Jews worshipped, visible shapes made for the purpose of representing him are false and wicked fictions; and all, therefore, who have recourse to them for knowledge are miserably deceived. In short, were it not true that all such knowledge is fallacious and spurious, the prophets would not condemn it in such general terms. This at least I maintain, that when we teach that all human attempts to give a visible shape to God are vanity and lies, we do nothing more than state *verbatim* what the prophets taught.

6. Moreover, let Lactantius and Eusebius<sup>1</sup> be read on this subject.<sup>2</sup> These writers assume it as an indisputable fact, that all the beings whose images were erected were originally men. In like manner, Augustine distinctly declares, that it is unlawful not only to worship images, but to dedicate them. And in this he says no more than had been long before decreed by the Elibertine Council, the thirty-sixth Canon of which is, “There must be no pictures used in churches: Let nothing which is adored or worshipped be painted on walls.” But the most memorable passage of all is that which Augustine quotes in another place from Varro, and in which he expressly concurs:—“Those who first introduced images of the gods both took away fear and brought in error.” Were this merely the saying of Varro, it might perhaps be of little weight, though it might well make us ashamed, that a heathen, groping as it were in darkness, should have attained to such a degree of light, as to see that corporeal images are unworthy of the majesty of God, and that, because they diminish reverential fear and encourage error. The sentiment itself bears witness that it was uttered with no less truth than shrewdness. But Augustine, while he borrows it from Varro, adduces it as conveying his own

<sup>1</sup> The French adds, “deux des plus anciens Docteurs de l’Eglise;”—two of the most ancient Doctors of the Church.

<sup>2</sup> Lact. Inst. Div. lib. i. c. 15; Euseb. Præf. Evang. lib. iii. c. 3, 4; also August. De Civitate Dei, lib. iv. c. 9, 31.



opinion. At the outset, indeed, he declares that the first errors into which men fell concerning God did not originate with images, but increased with them, as if new fuel had been added. Afterwards, he explains how the fear of God was thereby extinguished or impaired, his presence being brought into contempt by foolish, and childish, and absurd representations.<sup>1</sup> The truth of this latter remark I wish we did not so thoroughly experience. Whosoever, therefore, is desirous of being instructed in the true knowledge of God must apply to some other teacher than images.

7. Let Papists, then, if they have any sense of shame, henceforth desist from the futile plea, that images are the books of the unlearned—a plea so plainly refuted by innumerable passages of Scripture. And yet were I to admit the plea, it would not be a valid defence of their peculiar idols. It is well known what kind of monsters they obtrude upon us as divine. For what are the pictures or statues to which they append the names of saints, but exhibitions of the most shameless luxury or obscenity? Were any one to dress himself after their model, he would deserve the pillory. Indeed, brothels exhibit their inmates more chastely and modestly dressed than churches do images intended to represent virgins. The dress of the martyrs is in no respect more becoming. Let Papists then have some little regard to decency in decking their idols, if they would give the least plausibility to the false allegation, that they are books of some kind of sanctity. But even then we shall answer, that this is not the method in which the Christian people should be taught in sacred places. Very different from these follies is the doctrine in which God would have them to be there instructed. His injunction is, that the doctrine common to all should there be set forth by the preaching of the Word, and the administration of the sacraments,—a doctrine to which little heed can be given by those whose eyes are carried too and fro gazing at idols. And who are the unlearned, whose rudeness admits of being taught by images only? Just those

<sup>1</sup> The French is, “Pourceque la gloire de sa Divinite est vilipendée en une chose si sotté et lourde comme est un marmouset;”—because the glory of his Divinity is degraded into an object so silly and stupid as a marmoset.

whom the Lord acknowledges for his disciples ; those whom he honours with a revelation of his celestial philosophy, and desires to be trained in the saving mysteries of his kingdom. I confess, indeed, as matters now are, there are not a few in the present day who cannot want such books. But, I ask, whence this stupidity, but just because they are defrauded of the only doctrine which was fit to instruct them ? The simple reason why those who had the charge of churches resigned the office of teaching to idols was, because they themselves were dumb. Paul declares, that by the true preaching of the gospel Christ is portrayed and in a manner crucified before our eyes, (Gal. iii. 1.) Of what use, then, were the erection in churches of so many crosses of wood and stone, silver and gold, if this doctrine were faithfully and honestly preached, viz., Christ died that he might bear our curse upon the tree, that he might expiate our sins by the sacrifice of his body, wash them in his blood, and, in short, reconcile us to God the Father ? From this one doctrine the people would learn more than from a thousand crosses of wood and stone. As for crosses of gold and silver, it may be true that the avaricious give their eyes and minds to them more eagerly than to any heavenly instructor.

8. In regard to the origin of idols, the statement contained in the Book of Wisdom has been received with almost universal consent, viz., that they originated with those who bestowed this honour on the dead, from a superstitious regard to their memory. I admit that this perverse practice is of very high antiquity, and I deny not that it was a kind of torch by which the infatuated proneness of mankind to idolatry was kindled into a greater blaze. I do not, however, admit that it was the first origin of the practice. That idols were in use before the prevalence of that ambitious consecration of the images of the dead, frequently adverted to by profane writers, is evident from the words of Moses, (Gen. xxxi. 19.) When he relates that Rachel stole her father's images, he speaks of the use of idols as a common vice. Hence we may infer, that the human mind is, so to speak, a perpetual forge of idols. There was a kind of renewal of the world at the deluge, but before many years elapse, men are

forging gods at will. There is reason to believe, that in the holy Patriarch's lifetime his grandchildren were given to idolatry: so that he must with his own eyes, not without the deepest grief, have seen the earth polluted with idols—that earth whose iniquities God had lately purged with so fearful a judgment. For Joshua testifies, (Josh. xxiv. 2,) that Terah and Nachor, even before the birth of Abraham, were the worshippers of false gods. The progeny of Shem having so speedily revolted, what are we to think of the posterity of Ham, who had been cursed long before in their father? Thus, indeed, it is. The human mind, stuffed as it is with presumptuous rashness, dares to imagine a god suited to its own capacity; as it labours under dulness, nay, is sunk in the grossest ignorance, it substitutes vanity and an empty phantom in the place of God. To these evils another is added. The god whom man has thus conceived inwardly he attempts to embody outwardly. The mind, in this way, conceives the idol, and the hand gives it birth. That idolatry has its origin in the idea which men have, that God is not present with them unless his presence is carnally exhibited, appears from the example of the Israelites: “Up,” said they, “make us gods, which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him,” (Exod. xxxii. 1.) They knew, indeed, that there was a God whose mighty power they had experienced in so many miracles, but they had no confidence of his being near to them, if they did not with their eyes behold a corporeal symbol of his presence, as an attestation to his actual government. They desired, therefore, to be assured, by the image which went before them, that they were journeying under Divine guidance. And daily experience shows, that the flesh is always restless until it has obtained some figment like itself, with which it may vainly solace itself as a representation of God. In consequence of this blind passion men have, almost in all ages since the world began, set up signs on which they imagined that God was visibly depicted to their eyes.

9. After such a figment is formed, adoration forthwith



ensues : for when once men imagined that they beheld God in images, they also worshipped him as being there. At length their eyes and minds becoming wholly engrossed by them, they began to grow more and more brutish, gazing and wondering as if some divinity were actually before them. It hence appears that men do not fall away to the worship of images until they have imbibed some idea of a grosser description : not that they actually believe them to be gods, but that the power of divinity somehow or other resides in them. Therefore, whether it be God or a creature that is imaged, the moment you fall prostrate before it in veneration, you are so far fascinated by superstition. For this reason, the Lord not only forbade the erection of statues to himself, but also the consecration of titles and stones which might be set up for adoration. For the same reason, also, the second commandment has an additional part concerning adoration. For as soon as a visible form is given to God, his power also is supposed to be annexed to it. So stupid are men, that wherever they figure God, there they fix him, and by necessary consequence proceed to adore him. It makes no difference whether they worship the idol simply, or God in the idol ; it is always idolatry when divine honours are paid to an idol, be the colour what it may. And because God wills not to be worshipped superstitiously, whatever is bestowed upon idols is so much robbed from him.

Let those attend to this who set about hunting for miserable pretexts in defence of the execrable idolatry in which for many past ages true religion has been buried and sunk. It is said that the images are not accounted gods. Nor were the Jews so utterly thoughtless as not to remember that there was a God whose hand led them out of Egypt before they made the calf. Indeed, Aaron saying, that these were the gods which had brought them out of Egypt, they intimated, in no ambiguous terms, that they wished to retain God, their deliverer, provided they saw him going before them in the calf. Nor are the heathen to be deemed to have been so stupid as not to understand that God was something else than wood and stone. For they changed the images at plea-



sure, but always retained the same gods in their minds;<sup>1</sup> besides, they daily consecrated new images without thinking they were making new gods. Read the excuses which Augustine tells us were employed by the idolaters of his time, (*August. in Ps. cxiii.*) The vulgar, when accused, replied that they did not worship the visible object, but the Deity which dwelt in it invisibly. Those, again, who had what he calls a more refined religion, said, that they neither worshipped the image, nor any inhabiting Deity, but by means of the corporeal image beheld a symbol of that which it was their duty to worship. What then? All idolaters, whether Jewish or Gentile, were actuated in the very way which has been described. Not contented with spiritual understanding, they thought that images would give them a surer and nearer impression. When once this preposterous representation of God was adopted, there was no limit until, deluded every now and then by new impostures, they came to think that God exerted his power in images.<sup>2</sup> Still the Jews were persuaded, that, under such images, they worshipped the eternal God, the one true Lord of heaven and earth; and the Gentiles, also, in worshipping their own false gods, supposed them to dwell in heaven.

10. It is an impudent falsehood to deny that the thing which was thus anciently done is also done in our day. For why do men prostrate themselves before images? Why, when in the act of praying, do they turn towards them as to the ears of God? It is indeed true, as Augustine says, (*in Ps. cxiii.*), that no person thus prays or worships, looking at an image, without being impressed with the idea that he is heard by it, or without hoping that what he wishes will be performed by it. Why are such distinctions made between different images of the same God, that while one is passed by, or receives only common honour, another is worshipped with the highest solemnities? Why do they fatigue themselves with votive pilgrimages to images while they have many similar ones at

<sup>1</sup> The French is, "Neantmoins ils ne disoyent point pour cela qu'un Dieu fut divisé;"—nevertheless, they did not therefore say that the unity of God was divided.

<sup>2</sup> French, "Ne vouloit monstrier sa vertu que sous les images;"—would only show his power under the form of images.

home?<sup>1</sup> Why at the present time do they fight for them to blood and slaughter, as for their altars and hearths, showing more willingness to part with the one God than with their idols? And yet I am not now detailing the gross errors of the vulgar—errors almost infinite in number, and in possession of almost all hearts. I am only referring to what those profess who are most desirous to clear themselves of idolatry. They say; we do not call them our gods. Nor did either the Jews or Gentiles of old so call them; and yet the prophets never ceased to charge them with their adulteries with wood and stone for the very acts which are daily done by those who would be deemed Christians, namely, for worshipping God carnally in wood and stone.

11. I am not ignorant, however, and I have no wish to disguise the fact, that they endeavour to evade the charge by means of a more subtle distinction, which shall afterwards be fully considered, (see *infra*, s. 16, and chap. xii. s. 2.) The worship which they pay to their images they cloak with the name of *εἰδωλοδουλεία*, (*idolodulia*,) and deny to be *εἰδωλολατρεία*, (*idolatry*.) So they speak, holding that the worship which they call *dulia* may, without insult to God, be paid to statues and pictures. Hence, they think themselves blameless if they are only the *servants*, and not the *worshippers*, of idols; as if it were not a lighter matter to *worship* than to *serve*. And yet, while they take refuge in a Greek term, they very childishly contradict themselves. For the Greek word *λατρεύειν* having no other meaning than *to worship*, what they say is just the same as if they were to confess that they worship their images without worshipping them. They cannot object that I am quibbling upon words. The fact is, that they only betray their ignorance while they attempt to throw dust in the eyes of the simple. But how eloquent

<sup>1</sup> The two last sentences in French are, “Car laissant là un crucifix, ou une image de leur nostre-dame, ou n'en tenans point grand compte, ils mettent leur devotion à un autre. Pourquoi est-ce qu'ils trotent si loin en pelerinage pour voir un marmouset, duquel ils ont le semblable à leur porte?”—For there passing by a crucifix, or an image of what they call “Our Lady,” or making no great account of them, they pay their devotion to another. Why is it that they trot so far on a pilgrimage to see a marmoset, when they have one like it at their door?

soever they may be, they will never prove by their eloquence that one and the same thing makes two. Let them show how the things differ if they would be thought different from ancient idolaters. For as a murderer or an adulterer will not escape conviction by giving some adventitious name to his crime, so it is absurd for them to expect that the subtle device of a name will exculpate them, if they, in fact, differ in nothing from idolaters whom they themselves are forced to condemn. But so far are they from proving that their case is different, that the source of the whole evil consists in a preposterous rivalry with them, while they with their minds devise, and with their hands execute, symbolical shapes of God.

12. I am not, however, so superstitious as to think that all visible representations of every kind are unlawful. But as sculpture and painting are gifts of God, what I insist for is, that both shall be used purely and lawfully,—that gifts which the Lord has bestowed upon us, for his glory and our good, shall not be preposterously abused, nay, shall not be perverted to our destruction. We think it unlawful to give a visible shape to God, because God himself has forbidden it, and because it cannot be done without, in some degree, tarnishing his glory. And lest any should think that we are singular in this opinion, those acquainted with the productions of sound divines will find that they have always disapproved of it. If it be unlawful to make any corporeal representation of God, still more unlawful must it be to worship such a representation instead of God, or to worship God in it. The only things, therefore, which ought to be painted or sculptured, are things which can be presented to the eye; the majesty of God, which is far beyond the reach of any eye, must not be dishonoured by unbecoming representations. Visible representations are of two classes, viz., historical, which give a representation of events, and pictorial, which merely exhibit bodily shapes and figures. The former are of some use for instruction or admonition. The latter, so far as I can see, are only fitted for amusement. And yet it is certain, that the latter are almost the only kind which have hitherto been exhibited in churches. Hence we may infer, that the exhibition was not the result of judicious



selection, but of a foolish and inconsiderate longing. I say nothing as to the improper and unbecoming form in which they are presented, or the wanton license in which sculptors and painters have here indulged, (a point to which I alluded a little ago, *supra*, s. 7.) I only say, that though they were otherwise faultless, they could not be of any utility in teaching.

13. But, without reference to the above distinction, let us here consider, whether it is expedient that churches should contain representations of any kind, whether of events or human forms. First, then, if we attach any weight to the authority of the ancient Church, let us remember, that for five hundred years, during which religion was in a more prosperous condition, and a purer doctrine flourished, Christian churches were completely free from visible representations, (see Preface, and Book IV., c. ix. s. 9.) Hence their first admission as an ornament to churches took place after the purity of the ministry had somewhat degenerated. I will not dispute as to the rationality of the grounds on which the first introduction of them proceeded, but if you compare the two periods, you will find that the latter had greatly declined from the purity of the times when images were unknown. What then? Are we to suppose that those holy fathers, if they had judged the thing to be useful and salutary, would have allowed the Church to be so long without it? Undoubtedly, because they saw very little or no advantage, and the greatest danger in it, they rather rejected it intentionally and on rational grounds, than omitted it through ignorance or carelessness. This is clearly attested by Augustine in these words, (Ep. xlix. See also De Civit. Dei, lib. iv. c. 31.) "When images are thus placed aloft in seats of honour, to be beheld by those who are praying or sacrificing, though they have neither sense nor life, yet from appearing as if they had both, they affect weak minds just as if they lived and breathed," &c. And again, in another passage, (in Ps. cxii.) he says, "The effect produced, and in a manner extorted, by the bodily shape, is, that the mind, being itself in a body, imagines that a body which is so like its own must be similarly affected," &c. A little farther on he says, "Images are more



capable of giving a wrong bent to an unhappy soul, from having mouth, eyes, ears, and feet, than of correcting it, as they neither speak, nor see, nor hear, nor walk." This undoubtedly is the reason why John (1 John v. 21) enjoins us to beware, not only of the worship of idols, but also of idols themselves. And from the fearful infatuation under which the world has hitherto laboured, almost to the entire destruction of piety, we know too well from experience that the moment images appear in churches, idolatry has as it were raised its banner; because the folly of manhood cannot moderate itself, but forthwith falls away to superstitious worship. Even were the danger less imminent, still, when I consider the proper end for which churches are erected, it appears to me more unbecoming their sacredness than I well can tell, to admit any other images than those living symbols which the Lord has consecrated by his own word: I mean Baptism and the Lord's Supper, with the other ceremonies. By these our eyes ought to be more steadily fixed, and more vividly impressed, than to require the aid of any images which the wit of man may devise. Such, then, is the incomparable blessing of images—a blessing, the want of which, if we believe the Papists, cannot possibly be compensated!<sup>1</sup>

14. Enough, I believe, would have been said on this subject, were I not in a manner arrested by the Council of Nice; not the celebrated Council which Constantine the Great assembled, but one which was held eight hundred years ago by the orders and under the auspices of the Empress Irene.<sup>2</sup> This Council decreed not only that images were to be used in churches, but also that they were to be worshipped. Every thing, therefore, that I have said, is in danger of suffering great prejudice from the authority of this Synod. To confess the truth, however, I am not so much moved by this consideration, as by a wish to make my readers aware of the lengths to which the infatuation has been

<sup>1</sup> The French is, "qu'il n'y ait nulle recompense qui vaille un marmouset guignant à travers et faisant la mine tortue;"—that no compensation can equal the value of a marmoset looking askance and twisting its face.

<sup>2</sup> The French is, "une mechante Proserpine nommée Irene;"—a wicked Proserpine named Irene.

carried by those who had a greater fondness for images than became Christians. But let us first dispose of this matter. Those who defend the use of images appeal to that Synod for support. But there is a refutation extant which bears the name of Charlemagne, and which is proved by its style to be a production of that period. It gives the opinions delivered by the bishops who were present, and the arguments by which they supported them. John, deputy of the Eastern Churches, said, "God created man in his own image," and thence inferred that images ought to be used. He also thought there was a recommendation of images in the following passage, "Show me thy face, for it is beautiful." Another, in order to prove that images ought to be placed on altars, quoted the passage, "No man, when he hath lighted a candle, putteth it under a bushel." Another, to show the utility of looking at images, quoted a verse of the Psalms, "The light of thy countenance, O Lord, has shone upon us." Another laid hold of this similitude: As the Patriarchs used the sacrifices of the Gentiles, so ought Christians to use the images of saints instead of the idols of the Gentiles. They also twisted to the same effect the words, "Lord, I have loved the beauty of thy house." But the most ingenious interpretation was the following, "As we have heard, so also have we seen;" therefore, God is known not merely by the hearing of the word, but also by the seeing of images. Bishop Theodore was equally acute: "God," says he, "is to be admired in his saints;" and it is elsewhere said, "To the saints who are on earth;" therefore this must refer to images. In short, their absurdities are so extreme that it is painful even to quote them.

15. When they treat of adoration, great stress is laid on the worship of Pharaoh, the staff of Joseph, and the inscription which Jacob set up. In this last case they not only pervert the meaning of Scripture, but quote what is nowhere to be found. Then the passages, "Worship at his footstool"—"Worship in his holy mountain"—"The rulers of the people will worship before thy face," seem to them very solid and apposite proofs. Were one, with the view of turning the defenders of images into ridicule, to

put words into their mouths, could they be made to utter greater and grosser absurdities? But to put an end to all doubt on the subject of images, Theodosius Bishop of Mira confirms the propriety of worshipping them by the dreams of his archdeacon, which he adduces with as much gravity as if he were in possession of a response from heaven. Let the patrons of images now go and urge us with the decree of this Synod, as if the venerable Fathers did not bring themselves into utter discredit by handling Scripture so childishly, or wresting it so shamefully and profanely.

16. I come now to monstrous impieties, which it is strange they ventured to utter, and twice strange that all men did not protest against with the utmost detestation.<sup>1</sup> It is right to expose this frantic and flagitious extravagance, and thereby deprive the worship of images of that gloss of antiquity in which Papists seek to deck it. Theodosius Bishop of Amora fires off an anathema at all who object to the worship of images. Another attributes all the calamities of Greece and the East to the crime of not having worshipped them. Of what punishment then are the Prophets, Apostles, and Martyrs worthy, in whose day no images existed? They afterwards add, that if the statue of the Emperor is met with odours and incense, much more are the images of saints entitled to the honour. Constantius, Bishop of Constantia in Cyprus, professes to embrace images with reverence, and declares that he will pay them the respect which is due to the ever blessed Trinity: every person refusing to do the same thing he anathematizes and classes with Marcionites and Manichees. Lest you should think this the private opinion of an individual, they all assent. Nay, John the Eastern legate, carried still farther by his zeal, declares it would be better to allow a city to be filled with brothels than be denied the worship of images. At last it is resolved with one consent that the Samaritans are the worst of all heretics, and that the enemies of images are worse than the Samaritans. But that the play may not pass off without the accustomed *Plaudite*,

<sup>1</sup> The French adds, "et qu'il ne se soit trouvé gens qui leur crachassent au visage;"—and that people were not found to spit in their face.

the whole thus concludes, "Rejoice and exult, ye who, having the image of Christ, offer sacrifice to it." Where is now the distinction of *latría* and *dulia* with which they would throw dust in all eyes, human and divine? The Council unreservedly relies as much on images as on the living God.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Calvin, *De Vitandis Superstitionibus*, where also see *Resp. Pastorum Tigurin. adver. Nicodemitas*. See also Calvin, *De Fugiendis Illicitis Sacris*.



## CHAPTER XII.

GOD DISTINGUISHED FROM IDOLS, THAT HE MAY BE THE  
EXCLUSIVE OBJECT OF WORSHIP.*Sections.*

1. Scripture, in teaching that there is but one God, does not make a dispute about words, but attributes all honour and religious worship to him alone. This proved, 1st, By the etymology of the term. 2d, By the testimony of God himself, when he declares that he is a jealous God, and will not allow himself to be confounded with any fictitious Deity.
2. The Papists, in opposing this pure doctrine, gain nothing by their distinction of *dulia* and *latria*.
3. Passages of Scripture subversive of the Papistical distinction, and proving that religious worship is due to God alone. Perversions of Divine worship.

1. WE said at the commencement of our work, (chap. ii.,) that the knowledge of God consists not in frigid speculation, but carries worship along with it; and we touched by the way (chap. v. s. 6, 9, 10) on what will be more copiously treated in other places, (Book II., chap. viii.,) viz., how God is duly worshipped. Now I only briefly repeat, that whenever Scripture asserts the unity of God, it does not contend for a mere name, but also enjoins that nothing which belongs to Divinity be applied to any other; thus making it obvious in what respect pure religion differs from superstition. The Greek word εὐσεβεία means "right worship;" for the Greeks, though groping in darkness, were always aware that a certain rule was to be observed, in order that God might not be worshipped absurdly. Cicero truly and shrewdly derives the name *religion* from *relego*, and yet the reason which he assigns is forced and far-fetched, viz., that honest worshippers *read* and *read again*,

and ponder what is true.<sup>1</sup> I rather think the name is used in opposition to *vagrant license*—the greater part of mankind rashly taking up whatever first comes in their way, whereas piety, that it may stand with a firm step, confines itself within due bounds. In the same way superstition seems to take its name from its not being contented with the measure which reason prescribes, but accumulating a superfluous mass of vanities. But to say nothing more of words, it has been universally admitted in all ages, that religion is vitiated and perverted whenever false opinions are introduced into it, and hence it is inferred, that whatever is allowed to be done from inconsiderate zeal, cannot be defended by any pretext with which the superstitious may choose to cloak it. But although this confession is in every man's mouth, a shameful stupidity is forthwith manifested, inasmuch as men neither cleave to the one God, nor use any selection in their worship, as we have already observed.

But God, in vindicating his own right, first proclaims that he is a jealous God, and will be a stern avenger if he is confounded with any false god; and thereafter defines what due worship is, in order that the human race may be kept in obedience. Both of these he embraces in his Law when he first binds the faithful in allegiance to him as their only Lawgiver, and then prescribes a rule for worshipping him in accordance with his will. The Law, with its manifold uses and objects, I will consider in its own place; at present I only advert to this one, that it is designed as a bridle to curb men, and prevent them from turning aside to spurious worship. But it is necessary to attend to the observation with which I set out, viz., that unless everything peculiar to divinity is confined to God alone, he is robbed of his honour, and his worship is violated.

It may be proper here more particularly to attend to the subtleties which superstition employs. In revolting to strange gods, it avoids the appearance of abandoning the Supreme God, or reducing him to the same rank with

<sup>1</sup> Cic. De Nat. Deor. lib. ii. c. 28. See also Lactant. Inst. Div. lib. iv. c. 28.

others. It gives him the highest place, but at the same time surrounds him with a tribe of minor deities, among whom it portions out his peculiar offices. In this way, though in a dissembling and crafty manner, the glory of the Godhead is dissected, and not allowed to remain entire. In the same way the people of old, both Jews and Gentiles, placed an immense crowd in subordination to the father and ruler of the gods, and gave them, according to their rank, to share with the supreme God in the government of heaven and earth. In the same way, too, for some ages past, departed saints have been exalted to partnership with God, to be worshipped, invoked, and lauded in his stead. And yet we do not even think that the majesty of God is obscured by this abomination, whereas it is in a great measure suppressed and extinguished—all that we retain being a frigid opinion of his supreme power. At the same time, being deluded by these entanglements, we go astray after divers gods.

2. The distinction of what is called *dulia* and *latria* was invented for the very purpose of permitting divine honours to be paid to angels and dead men with apparent impunity. For it is plain that the worship which Papists pay to saints differs in no respect from the worship of God: for this worship is paid without distinction; only when they are pressed they have recourse to the evasion, that what belongs to God is kept unimpaired, because they leave him *latria*. But since the question relates not to the word, but the thing, how can they be allowed to sport at will with a matter of the highest moment? But not to insist on this, the utmost they will obtain by their distinction is, that they give worship to God, and service to the others. For *λατρεία* in Greek has the same meaning as *worship* in Latin; whereas *δούλεια* properly means *service*, though the words are sometimes used in Scripture indiscriminately. But granting that the distinction is invariably preserved, the thing to be inquired into is the meaning of each. *Δουλεία* unquestionably means *service*, and *λατρεία* *worship*. But no man doubts that to serve is something higher than to worship. For it were often a hard thing to serve him whom you would not refuse to reverence. It is, therefore, an unjust



division to assign the greater to the saints and leave the less to God. But several of the ancient fathers observed this distinction. What if they did, when all men see that it is not only improper, but utterly frivolous?

3. Laying aside subtleties, let us examine the thing. When Paul reminds the Galatians of what they were before they came to the knowledge of God, he says, that they "did service unto them which by nature are no gods," (Gal. iv. 8.) Because he does not say *latria*, was their superstition excusable? This superstition, to which he gives the name of *dulia*, he condemns as much as if he had given it the name of *latria*. When Christ repels Satan's insulting proposal with the words, "It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve," (Matth. iv. 10,) there was no question of *latria*. For all that Satan asked was *προσκύνησις*, (obeisance.) In like manner, when John is rebuked by the angel for falling on his knees before him, (Rev. xix. 10; xxii. 8, 9,) we ought not to suppose that John had so far forgotten himself as to have intended to transfer the honour due to God alone to an angel. But because it was impossible that a worship connected with religion should not savour somewhat of divine worship, he could not *προσκύνησεν* (do obeisance to) the angel without derogating from the glory of God. True, we often read that men were worshipped; but that was, if I may so speak, civil honour. The case is different with religious honour, which, the moment it is conjoined with worship, carries profanation of the divine honour along with it. The same thing may be seen in the case of Cornelius, (Acts x. 25.) He had not made so little progress in piety as not to confine supreme worship to God alone. Therefore, when he prostrates himself before Peter, he certainly does it not with the intention of adoring him instead of God. Yet Peter sternly forbids him. And why, but just because men never distinguish so accurately between the worship of God and the creatures as not to transfer promiscuously to the creature that which belongs only to God. Therefore, if we would have one God, let us remember that we can never appropriate the minutest portion of his glory without retaining what is



his due. Accordingly, when Zechariah discourses concerning the repairing of the Church, he distinctly says not only that there would be one God, but also that he would have only one name—the reason being, that he might have nothing in common with idols. The nature of the worship which God requires will be seen in its own place, (Book II., c. vii. and viii.) He has been pleased to prescribe in his Law what is lawful and right, and thus astrict men to a certain rule, lest any should allow themselves to devise a worship of their own. But as it is inexpedient to burden the reader by mixing up a variety of topics, I do not now dwell on this one. Let it suffice to remember, that whatever offices of piety are bestowed anywhere else than on God alone, are of the nature of sacrilege. First, superstition attached divine honours to the sun and stars, or to idols: afterwards ambition followed—ambition which, decking man in the spoils of God, dared to profane all that was sacred. And though the principle of worshipping a supreme Deity continued to be held, still the practice was to sacrifice promiscuously to genii and minor gods, or departed heroes: so prone is the descent to this vice of communicating to a crowd that which God strictly claims as his own peculiar right!

## CHAPTER XIII.

THE UNITY OF THE DIVINE ESSENCE IN THREE PERSONS  
TAUGHT, IN SCRIPTURE, FROM THE FOUNDATION OF THE  
WORLD.

This chapter consists of two parts. The former delivers the orthodox doctrine concerning the Holy Trinity. This occupies from sec. 1-21, and may be divided into four heads; the first, treating of the meaning of Person, including both the term and the thing meant by it, sec. 2-6; the second, proving the deity of the Son, sec. 7-13; the third, the deity of the Holy Spirit, sec. 14 and 15; and the fourth, explaining what is to be held concerning the Holy Trinity. The second part of the chapter refutes certain heresies which have arisen, particularly in our age, in opposition to this orthodox doctrine. This occupies from sec. 21 to the end.

*Sections.*

1. Scripture, in teaching that the essence of God is immense and spiritual, refutes not only idolaters and the foolish wisdom of the world, but also the Manichees and Anthropomorphites. These latter briefly refuted.
2. In this one essence are three persons, yet so that neither is there a triple God, nor is the simple essence of God divided. Meaning of the word Person in this discussion. Three hypostases in God, or the essence of God.
3. Objection of those who, in this discussion, reject the use of the word Person. Answer 1. That it is not a foreign term, but is employed for the explanation of sacred mysteries.
4. Answer continued, 2. The orthodox compelled to use the terms, Trinity, Subsistence, and Person. Examples from the case of the Arians and Sabellians.
5. Answer continued, 3. The ancient Church, though differing somewhat in the explanation of these terms, agree in substance. Proofs from Hilary, Jerome, Augustine, in their use of the words Essence, Substance, Hypostasis. 4. Provided the orthodox meaning is retained, there should be no dispute about mere terms. But those who object to the terms usually favour the Arian and Sabellian heresy.
6. After the definition of the term follows a definition and explanation of the thing meant by it. The distinction of Persons.
7. Proofs of the eternal Deity of the Son. The Son the λόγος of the

Eternal Father, and, therefore, the Son Eternal God. Objection.  
Reply.

8. Objection, that the *λόγος* began to be when the creating God spoke. Answer confirmed by Scripture and argument.
9. The Son called God and Jehovah. Other names of the Eternal Father applied to him in the Old Testament. He is, therefore, the Eternal God. Another objection refuted. Case of the Jews explained.
10. The angel who appeared to the fathers under the Law asserts that he is Jehovah. That angel was the *λόγος* of the Eternal Father. The Son being that *λόγος* is Eternal God. Impiety of Servetus refuted. Why the Son appeared in the form of an angel.
11. Passages from the New Testament in which the Son is acknowledged to be the Lord of Hosts, the Judge of the world, the God of glory, the Creator of the world, the Lord of angels, the King of the Church, the eternal *λόγος*, God blessed for ever, God manifest in the flesh, the equal of God, the true God and eternal life, the Lord and God of all believers. Therefore, the Eternal God.
12. Christ the Creator, Preserver, Redeemer, and Searcher of hearts. Therefore, the Eternal God.
13. Christ, by his own inherent power, wrought miracles, and bestowed the power of working them on others. Out of the Eternal God there is no salvation, no righteousness, no life. All these are in Christ. Christ, consequently, is the Eternal God. He in whom we believe and hope, to whom we pray, whom the Church acknowledges as the Saviour of the faithful, whom to know is life eternal, in whom the pious glory, and through whom eternal blessings are communicated, is the Eternal God. All these Christ is, and, therefore, he is God.
14. The Divinity of the Spirit proved. I. He is the Creator and Preserver of the world. II. He sent the Prophets. III. He quickeneth all things. IV. He is everywhere present. V. He renews the saints, and fits them for eternal life. VI. All the offices of Deity belong to him.
15. The Divinity of the Spirit continued. VII. He is called God. VIII. Blasphemy against him is not forgiven.
16. What view to be taken of the Trinity. The form of Christian baptism proves that there are three persons in one essence. The Arian and Macedonian heresies.
17. Of the distinction of Persons. They are distinct, but not divided. This proved.
18. Analogies taken from human affairs to be cautiously used. Due regard to be paid to those mentioned by Scripture.
19. How the Three Persons not only do not destroy, but constitute the most perfect unity.

20. Conclusion of this part of the chapter, and summary of the true doctrine concerning the unity of Essence and the Three Persons.
21. Refutation of Arian, Macedonian, and Antitrinitarian heresies. Caution to be observed.
22. The more modern Antitrinitarians, and especially Servetus, refuted.
23. Other Antitrinitarians refuted. No good objection that Christ is called the Son of God, since he is also called God. Impious absurdities of some heretics.
24. The name of God sometimes given to the Son absolutely as to the Father. Same as to other attributes. Objections refuted.
25. Objections further refuted. Caution to be used.
26. Previous refutations further explained.
27. Reply to certain passages produced from Irenæus. The meaning of Irenæus.
28. Reply to certain passages produced from Tertullian. The meaning of Tertullian.
29. Antitrinitarians refuted by ancient Christian writers ; *e. g.*, Justin, Hilary. Objections drawn from writings improperly attributed to Ignatius. Conclusion of the whole discussion concerning the Trinity.

1. THE doctrine of Scripture concerning the immensity and the spirituality of the essence of God, should have the effect not only of dissipating the wild dreams of the vulgar, but also of refuting the subtleties of a profane philosophy. One of the ancients thought he spake shrewdly when he said that everything we see and everything we do not see is God, (Senec. Præf. lib. i. Quæst. Nat.) In this way he fancied that the Divinity was transfused into every separate portion of the world. But although God, in order to keep us within the bounds of soberness, treats sparingly of his essence, still, by the two attributes which I have mentioned, he at once suppresses all gross imaginations, and checks the audacity of the human mind. His immensity surely ought to deter us from measuring him by our sense, while his spiritual nature forbids us to indulge in carnal or earthly speculation concerning him. With the same view he frequently represents heaven as his dwelling-place. It is true, indeed, that as he is incomprehensible, he fills the earth also, but knowing that our minds are heavy and grovel on the earth, he raises us above the world, that he may shake off our sluggishness and inactivity. And here we have a refutation of



the error of the <sup>Manichees</sup> Manichees, who, by adopting two first principles, made the devil almost the equal of God. This, assuredly, was both to destroy his unity and restrict his immensity. Their attempt to pervert certain passages of Scripture proved their shameful ignorance, as the very nature of the error did their monstrous infatuation. The Anthropomorphites also, who dreamed of a corporeal God, because mouth, ears, eyes, hands, and feet, are often ascribed to him in Scripture, are easily refuted. For who is so devoid of intellect as not to understand that God, in so speaking, lips with us as nurses are wont to do with little children? Such modes of expression, therefore, do not so much express what kind of a being God is, as accommodate the knowledge of him to our feebleness. In doing so, he must, of course, stoop far below his proper height.

2. But there is another special mark by which he designates himself, for the purpose of giving a more intimate knowledge of his nature. While he proclaims his unity, he distinctly sets it before us as existing in three persons. These we must hold, unless the bare and empty name of Deity merely is to flutter in our brain without any genuine knowledge. Moreover, lest any one should dream of a threefold God, or think that the simple essence is divided by the three Persons, we must here seek a brief and easy definition which may effectually guard us from error. But as some strongly inveigh against the term Person as being merely of human invention, let us first consider how far they have any ground for doing so.

When the Apostle calls the Son of God "the express image of his person," (Heb. i. 3,) he undoubtedly does assign to the Father some subsistence in which he differs from the Son. For to hold with some interpreters that the term is equivalent to essence, (as if Christ represented the substance of the Father like the impression of a seal upon wax,) were not only harsh but absurd. For the essence of God being simple and undivided, and contained in himself entire, in full perfection, without partition or diminution, it is improper, nay, ridiculous, to call it his express image, (*χαρακτὴρ*.) But because the Father, though distinguished by

his own peculiar properties, has expressed himself wholly in the Son, he is said with perfect reason to have rendered his person (hypostasis) manifest in him. And this aptly accords with what is immediately added, viz., that he is “the brightness of his glory.” The fair inference from the Apostle’s words is, that there is a proper subsistence (hypostasis) of the Father, which shines refulgent in the Son. From this, again, it is easy to infer that there is a subsistence (hypostasis) of the Son which distinguishes him from the Father. The same holds in the case of the Holy Spirit; for we will immediately prove both that he is God, and that he has a separate subsistence from the Father. This, moreover, is not a distinction of essence, which it were impious to multiply. If credit, then, is given to the Apostle’s testimony, it follows that there are three persons (hypostases) in God. The Latins having used the word *Personæ* to express the same thing as the Greek ὑποστάσις, it betrays excessive fastidiousness and even perverseness to quarrel with the term. The most literal translation would be *subsistence*. Many have used *substance* in the same sense. Nor, indeed, was the use of the term *Person* confined to the Latin Church. For the Greek Church in like manner, perhaps, for the purpose of testifying their consent, have taught that there are three πρόσωπα (*aspects*) in God. All these, however, whether Greeks or Latins, though differing as to the word, are perfectly agreed in substance.

3. Now, then, though heretics may snarl and the excessively fastidious carp at the word *Person* as inadmissible, in consequence of its human origin, since they cannot displace us from our position that three are named, each of whom is perfect God, and yet that there is no plurality of gods, it is most uncandid to attack the terms which do nothing more than explain what the Scriptures declare and sanction. “It were better,” they say, “to confine not only our meanings but our words within the bounds of Scripture, and not scatter about foreign terms to become the future seed-beds of brawls and dissensions. In this way, men grow tired of quarrels about words; the truth is lost in altercation, and charity melts away amid hateful strife.” If they

call it a *foreign* term, because it cannot be pointed out in Scripture in so many syllables, they certainly impose an unjust law—a law which would condemn every interpretation of Scripture that is not composed of other words of Scripture. But if by *foreign* they mean that which, after being idly devised, is superstitiously defended,—which tends more to strife than edification,—which is used either out of place, or with no benefit,—which offends pious ears by its harshness, and leads them away from the simplicity of God's Word, I embrace their soberness with all my heart. For I think we are bound to speak of God as reverently as we are bound to think of him. As our own thoughts respecting him are foolish, so our own language respecting him is absurd. Still, however, some medium must be observed. The unerring standard both of thinking and speaking must be derived from the Scriptures: by it all the thoughts of our minds, and the words of our mouths, should be tested. But in regard to those parts of Scripture which, to our capacities, are dark and intricate, what forbids us to explain them in clearer terms—terms, however, kept in reverent and faithful subordination to Scripture truth, used sparingly and modestly, and not without occasion? Of this we are not without many examples. When it has been proved that the Church was impelled, by the strongest necessity, to use the words Trinity and Person, will not he who still inveighs against novelty of terms be deservedly suspected of taking offence at the light of truth, and of having no other ground for his invective, than that the truth is made plain and transparent?

4. Such novelty (if novelty it should be called) becomes most requisite, when the truth is to be maintained against calumniators who evade it by quibbling. Of this, we of the present day have too much experience in being constantly called upon to attack the enemies of pure and sound doctrine. These slippery snakes escape by their swift and tortuous windings, if not strenuously pursued, and when caught, firmly held. Thus the early Christians, when harassed with the disputes which heresies produced, were forced to declare their sentiments in terms most scrupulously exact in order that no indirect subterfuges might remain



to ungodly men, to whom ambiguity of expression was a kind of hiding-place. Arius confessed that Christ was God, and the Son of God; because the passages of Scripture to this effect were too clear to be resisted, and then, as if he had done well, pretended to concur with others. But, meanwhile, he ceased not to give out that Christ was created, and had a beginning like other creatures. To drag this man of wiles out of his lurking-places, the ancient Church took a further step, and declared that Christ is the eternal Son of the Father, and consubstantial with the Father. The impiety was fully disclosed when the Arians began to declare their hatred and utter detestation of the term *ὁμοουσίος*. Had their first confession, viz., that Christ was God, been sincere and from the heart, they would not have denied that he was consubstantial with the Father. Who dare charge those ancient writers as men of strife and contention, for having debated so warmly, and disturbed the quiet of the Church for a single word? That little word distinguished between Christians of pure faith and the blasphemous Arians. Next Sabellius arose, who counted the names of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, as almost nonentities; maintaining that they were not used to mark out some distinction, but that they were different attributes of God, like many others of a similar kind. When the matter was debated, he acknowledged his belief that the Father was God, the Son God, the Spirit God; but then he had the evasion ready, that he had said nothing more than if he had called God powerful, and just, and wise. Accordingly, he sung another note, viz., that the Father was the Son, and the Holy Spirit the Father, without order or distinction. The worthy doctors who then had the interests of piety at heart, in order to defeat this man's dishonesty, proclaimed that three subsistences were to be truly acknowledged in the one God. That they might protect themselves against tortuous craftiness by the simple open truth, they affirmed that a Trinity of Persons subsisted in the one God, or (which is the same thing) in the unity of God.

5. Where names have not been invented rashly, we must



beware lest we become chargeable with arrogance and rashness in rejecting them. I wish, indeed, that such names were buried, provided all would concur in the belief that the Father, Son, and Spirit, are one God, and yet that the Son is not the Father, nor the Spirit the Son, but that each has his peculiar subsistence. I am not so minutely precise as to fight furiously for mere words. For I observe, that the writers of the ancient Church, while they uniformly spoke with great reverence on these matters, neither agreed with each other, nor were always consistent with themselves. How strange the formulæ used by Councils, and defended by Hilary! How extravagant the view which Augustine sometimes takes! How unlike the Greeks are to the Latins! But let one example of variance suffice. The Latins, in translating ὁμοουσιος, used *consubstantialis*, (consubstantial,) intimating that there was one substance of the Father and the Son, and thus using the word Substance for Essence. Hence Jerome, in his Letter to Damasus, says it is profane to affirm that there are three substances in God. But in Hilary you will find it said more than a hundred times that there are three substances in God. Then how greatly is Jerome perplexed with the word Hypostasis! He suspects some lurking poison, when it is said that there are three Hypostases in God. And he does not disguise his belief that the expression, though used in a pious sense, is improper; if, indeed, he was sincere in saying this, and did not rather designedly endeavour, by an unfounded calumny, to throw odium on the Eastern bishops whom he hated. He certainly shows little candour in asserting, that in all heathen schools οὐσία is equivalent to Hypostasis—an assertion completely refuted by trite and common use.

More courtesy and moderation is shown by Augustine, (De Trinit. lib. v. c. 8 and 9,) who, although he says that Hypostasis in this sense is new to Latin ears, is still so far from objecting to the ordinary use of the term by the Greeks, that he is even tolerant of the Latins, who had imitated the Greek phraseology. The purport of what Socrates says of the term, in the Sixth Book of the Tripartite History, is, that it had been improperly applied to

this purpose by the unskilful. Hilary (De Trinitat. lib. ii.) charges it upon the heretics as a great crime, that their misconduct had rendered it necessary to subject to the peril of human utterance things which ought to have been reverently confined within the mind, not disguising his opinion that those who do so, do what is unlawful, speak what is ineffable, and pry into what is forbidden. Shortly after, he apologises at great length for presuming to introduce new terms. For, after putting down the natural names of Father, Son, and Spirit, he adds, that all further inquiry transcends the significancy of words, the discernment of sense, and the apprehension of intellect. And in another place, (De Conciliis,) he congratulates the Bishops of France in not having framed any other confession, but received, without alteration, the ancient and most simple confession received by all Churches from the days of the Apostles. Not unlike this is the apology of Augustine, that the term had been wrung from him by necessity from the poverty of human language in so high a matter: not that the reality could be thereby expressed, but that he might not pass on in silence without attempting to show how the Father, Son, and Spirit, are three.

The modesty of these holy men should be an admonition to us not instantly to dip our pen in gall, and sternly denounce those who may be unwilling to swear to the terms which we have devised, provided they do not in this betray pride, or petulance, or unbecoming heat, but are willing to ponder the necessity which compels us so to speak, and may thus become gradually accustomed to a useful form of expression. Let men also studiously beware, that in opposing the Arians on the one hand, and the Sabellians on the other, and eagerly endeavouring to deprive both of any handle for cavil, they do not bring themselves under some suspicion of being the disciples of either Arius or Sabellius. Arius says, that *Christ is God*, and then mutters that *he was made, and had a beginning*. He says, that *he is one with the Father*; but secretly whispers in the ears of his party, *made one*, like other believers, though with special privilege. Say, *he is consubstantial*, and you immediately pluck the mask from this chameleon, though you add nothing to Scripture.

Sabellius says, that *the Father, Son, and Spirit, indicate some distinction in God*. Say, *they are three*, and he will bawl out that you are making three Gods. Say, that *there is a Trinity of Persons in one Divine essence*, you will only express in one word what the Scriptures say, and stop his empty prattle. Should any be so superstitiously precise as not to tolerate these terms, still do their worst, they will not be able to deny that when *one* is spoken of, a unity of substance must be understood, and when *three* in one essence, the persons in this Trinity are denoted. When this is confessed without equivocation, we dwell not on words. But I was long ago made aware, and, indeed, on more than one occasion, that those who contend pertinaciously about words are tainted with some hidden poison; and, therefore, that it is more expedient to provoke them purposely, than to court their favour by speaking obscurely.

6. But to say nothing more of words, let us now attend to the thing signified. By *person*, then, I mean a subsistence in the Divine essence,—a subsistence which, while related to the other two, is distinguished from them by incommunicable properties. By *subsistence* we wish something else to be understood than *essence*. For if the Word were God simply, and had not some property peculiar to himself, John could not have said correctly that he had always been with God. When he adds immediately after, that the Word was God, he calls us back to the one essence. But because he could not be with God without dwelling in the Father, hence arises that subsistence, which, though connected with the essence by an indissoluble tie, being incapable of separation, yet has a special mark by which it is distinguished from it. Now, I say that each of the three subsistences while related to the others is distinguished by its own properties. Here relation is distinctly expressed, because, when God is mentioned simply and indefinitely, the name belongs not less to the Son and Spirit than to the Father. But whenever the Father is compared with the Son, the peculiar property of each distinguishes the one from the other. Again, whatever is proper to each I affirm to be incommunicable, because nothing can apply or be transferred to the Son which



is attributed to the Father as a mark of distinction. I have no objections to adopt the definition of Tertullian, provided it is properly understood, "that there is in God a certain arrangement or economy, which makes no change on the unity of essence."—Tertull. Lib. contra Praxeam.

7. Before proceeding farther, it will be necessary to prove the Divinity of the Son and the Holy Spirit. Thereafter, we shall see how they differ from each other. When the Word of God is set before us in the Scriptures, it were certainly most absurd to imagine that it is only a fleeting and evanescent voice, which is sent out into the air, and comes forth beyond God himself, as was the case with the communications made to the patriarchs, and all the prophecies. The reference is rather to the wisdom ever dwelling with God, and by which all oracles and prophecies were inspired. For, as Peter testifies, (1 Pet. i. 11,) the ancient prophets spake by the Spirit of Christ just as did the apostles, and all who after them were ministers of the heavenly doctrine. But as Christ was not yet manifested, we necessarily understand that the Word was begotten of the Father before all ages. But if that Spirit, whose organs the prophets were, belonged to the Word, the inference is irresistible, that the Word was truly God. And this is clearly enough shown by Moses in his account of the creation, where he places the Word as intermediate. For why does he distinctly narrate that God, in creating each of his works, said, Let there be this—let there be that, unless that the unsearchable glory of God might shine forth in his image? I know prattlers would easily evade this, by saying that *Word* is used for *order* or *command*; but the apostles are better expositors, when they tell us that the worlds were created by the Son, and that he sustains all things by his mighty word, (Heb. i. 2.) For we here see that *word* is used for the *nod* or *command* of the Son, who is himself the eternal and essential Word of the Father. And no man of sane mind can have any doubt as to Solomon's meaning, when he introduces Wisdom as begotten by God, and presiding at the creation of the world, and all other divine operations, (Prov. viii. 22.) For it were trifling and foolish to imagine any temporary com-



mand at a time when God was pleased to execute his fixed and eternal counsel, and something more still mysterious. To this our Saviour's words refer, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work," (John v. 17.) In thus affirming, that from the foundation of the world he constantly worked with the Father, he gives a clearer explanation of what Moses simply touched. The meaning therefore is, that God spoke in such a manner as left the Word his peculiar part in the work, and thus made the operation common to both. But the clearest explanation is given by John, when he states that the Word which was from the beginning, God and with God, was, together with God the Father, the maker of all things. For he both attributes a substantial and permanent essence to the Word, assigning to it a certain peculiarity, and distinctly showing how God spoke the world into being. Therefore, as all revelations from heaven are duly designated by the title of the Word of God, so the highest place must be assigned to that substantial Word, the source of all inspiration, which, as being liable to no variation, remains for ever one and the same with God, and is God.

8. Here an outcry is made by certain men, who, while they dare not openly deny his divinity, secretly rob him of his eternity. For they contend that the Word only began to be when God opened his sacred mouth in the creation of the world. Thus, with excessive temerity, they imagine some change in the essence of God. For as the names of God, which have respect to external work, began to be ascribed to him from the existence of the work, (as when he is called the Creator of heaven and earth,) so piety does not recognise or admit any name which might indicate that a change had taken place in God himself. For if any thing adventitious took place, the saying of James would cease to be true, that "every good gift, and every perfect gift, is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning," (James i. 17.) Nothing, therefore, is more intolerable than to fancy a beginning to that Word which was always God, and afterwards was the Creator of the world. But they think they argue acutely, in maintaining that Moses, when

he says that God then spoke for the first time, must be held to intimate that till then no Word existed in him. This is the merest trifling. It does not surely follow, that because a thing begins to be manifested at a certain time, it never existed previously. I draw a very different conclusion. Since at the very moment when God said, "Let there be light," the energy of the Word was immediately exerted, it must have existed long before. If any inquire how long, he will find it was without beginning. No certain period of time is defined, when he himself says, "Now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was," (John xvii. 5.) Nor is this omitted by John: for before he descends to the creation of the world, he says, that "in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God." We, therefore, again conclude, that the Word was eternally begotten by God, and dwelt with him from everlasting. In this way, his true essence, his eternity, and divinity, are established.

9. But though I am not now treating of the office of the Mediator, having deferred it till the subject of redemption is considered, yet because it ought to be clear and incontrovertible to all, that Christ is that Word become incarnate, this seems the most appropriate place to introduce those passages which assert the Divinity of Christ. When it is said in the forty-fifth Psalm, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever," the Jews quibble that the name Elohim is applied to angels and sovereign powers. But no passage is to be found in Scripture, where an eternal throne is set up for a creature. For he is not called God simply, but also the eternal Ruler. Besides, the title is not conferred on any man, without some addition, as when it is said that Moses would be a God to Pharaoh, (Exod. vii. 1.) Some read as if it were in the genitive case, but this is too insipid. I admit, that anything possessed of singular excellence is often called divine, but it is clear from the context, that this meaning here were harsh and forced, and totally inapplicable. But if their perverseness still refuses to yield, surely there is no obscurity in Isaiah, where Christ is introduced both as God, and as possessed of supreme power, one

of the peculiar attributes of God, "His name shall be called the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace," (Isa. ix. 6.) Here, too, the Jews object, and invert the passage thus, This is the name by which the mighty God, the Everlasting Father, will call him; so that all which they leave to the Son is, "Prince of Peace." But why should so many epithets be here accumulated on God the Father, seeing the prophet's design is to present the Messiah with certain distinguished properties which may induce us to put our faith in him? There can be no doubt, therefore, that he who a little before was called Immanuel, is here called the Mighty God. Moreover, there can be nothing clearer than the words of Jeremiah, "This is the name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS," (Jer. xxiii. 6.) For as the Jews themselves teach that the other names of God are mere epithets, whereas this, which they call the ineffable name, is substantive, and expresses his essence, we infer, that the only begotten Son is the eternal God, who elsewhere declares, "My glory will I not give to another," (Isa. xlii. 8.) An attempt is made to evade this from the fact, that this name is given by Moses to the altar which he built, and by Ezekiel to the New Jerusalem. But who sees not that the altar was erected as a memorial to show that God was the exalter of Moses, and that the name of God was applied to Jerusalem, merely to testify the Divine presence? For thus the prophet speaks, "The name of the city from that day shall be, The Lord is there," (Ezek. xlviii. 35.) In the same way, "Moses built an altar, and called the name of it JEHOVAH-nissi," (Jehovah my exaltation.) But it would seem the point is still more keenly disputed as to another passage in Jeremiah, where the same title is applied to Jerusalem in these words, "In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely; and this is the name wherewith she shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness." But so far is this passage from being adverse to the truth which we defend, that it rather supports it. The prophet having formerly declared that Christ is the true Jehovah from whom righteousness flows, now declares that the Church would be



made so sensible of this as to be able to glory in assuming his very name. In the former passage, therefore, the fountain and cause of righteousness is set down, in the latter, the effect is described.

10. But if this does not satisfy the Jews, I know not what cavils will enable them to evade the numerous passages in which Jehovah is said to have appeared in the form of an Angel, (Judges vi. vii. xiii. 16—23, &c.) This Angel claims for himself the name of the Eternal God. Should it be alleged that this is done in respect of the office which he bears, the difficulty is by no means solved. No servant would rob God of his honour, by allowing sacrifice to be offered to himself. But the Angel, by refusing to eat bread, orders the sacrifice due to Jehovah to be offered to him. Thus the fact itself proves that he was truly Jehovah. Accordingly, Manoah and his wife infer from the sign, that they had seen not only an angel, but God. Hence Manoah's exclamation, "We shall die; for we have seen the Lord." When the woman replies, "If Jehovah had wished to slay us, he would not have received the sacrifice at our hand," she acknowledges that he who is previously called an angel was certainly God. We may add, that the angel's own reply removes all doubt, "Why do ye ask my name, which is wonderful?" Hence the impiety of Servetus was the more detestable, when he maintained that God was never manifested to Abraham and the Patriarchs, but that an angel was worshipped in his stead. The orthodox doctors of the Church have correctly and wisely expounded, that the Word of God was the supreme angel, who then began, as it were by anticipation, to perform the office of Mediator. For though he were not clothed with flesh, yet he descended as in an intermediate form, that he might have more familiar access to the faithful. This closer intercourse procured for him the name of the Angel; still, however, he retained the character which justly belonged to him—that of the God of ineffable glory. The same thing is intimated by Hosea, who, after mentioning the wrestling of Jacob with the angel, says, "Even the Lord God of hosts; the Lord is his memorial," (Hosea xii. 5.) Servetus



again insinuates that God personated an angel; as if the prophet did not confirm what had been said by Moses, "Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name?" (Gen. xxxii. 29, 30.) And the confession of the holy Patriarch sufficiently declares that he was not a created angel, but one in whom the fulness of the Godhead dwelt, when he says, "I have seen God face to face." Hence also Paul's statement, that Christ led the people in the wilderness, (1 Cor. x. 4. See also Calvin on Acts vii. 30, and *infra*, chap. xiv. s. 9.) Although the time of humiliation had not yet arrived, the eternal Word exhibited a type of the office which he was to fulfil. Again, if the first chapter of Zechariah (ver. 9, &c.) and the second (ver. 3, &c.) be candidly considered, it will be seen that the angel who sends the other angel is immediately after declared to be the Lord of hosts, and that supreme power is ascribed to him. I omit numberless passages in which our faith rests secure, though they may not have much weight with the Jews. For when it is said in Isaiah, "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us; this is the Lord: we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation," (Isa. xxv. 9,) even the blind may see that the God referred to is he who again rises up for the deliverance of his people. And the emphatic description, twice repeated, precludes the idea that reference is made to any other than to Christ. Still clearer and stronger is the passage of Malachi, in which a promise is made that the messenger who was then expected would come to his own temple, (Mal. iii. 1.) The temple certainly was dedicated to Almighty God only, and yet the prophet claims it for Christ. Hence it follows, that he is the God who was always worshipped by the Jews.

11. The New Testament teems with innumerable passages, and our object must therefore be, the selection of a few, rather than an accumulation of the whole. But though the Apostles spoke of him after his appearance in the flesh as Mediator, every passage which I adduce will be sufficient to prove his eternal Godhead. And the first thing deserving of special observation is, that predictions concerning

the eternal God are applied to Christ, as either already fulfilled in him, or to be fulfilled at some future period. Isaiah prophesies, that "the Lord of Hosts" shall be "for a stone of stumbling, and for a rock of offence," (Isa. viii. 14.) Paul asserts that this prophecy was fulfilled in Christ, (Rom. ix. 33,) and, therefore, declares that Christ is that Lord of Hosts. In like manner, he says in another passage, "We shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God." Since in Isaiah God predicts this of himself, (Isa. xlv. 23,) and Christ exhibits the reality fulfilled in himself, it follows that he is the very God, whose glory cannot be given to another. It is clear also, that the passage from the Psalms (Ps. lxxviii. 19) which he quotes in the Epistle to the Ephesians, is applicable only to God, "When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive," (Eph. iv. 8.) Understanding that such an ascension was shadowed forth when the Lord exerted his power, and gained a glorious victory over heathen nations, he intimates that what was thus shadowed was more fully manifested in Christ. So John testifies that it was the glory of the Son which was revealed to Isaiah in a vision, (John xii. 41; Isa. vi. 4,) though Isaiah himself expressly says that what he saw was the Majesty of God. Again, there can be no doubt that those qualities which, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, are applied to the Son, are the brightest attributes of God, "Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth," &c., and, "Let all the angels of God worship him," (Heb. i. 10, 6.) And yet he does not pervert the passages in thus applying them to Christ, since Christ alone performed the things which these passages celebrate. It was he who arose and pitied Zion—he who claimed for himself dominion over all nations and islands. And why should John have hesitated to ascribe the Majesty of God to Christ, after saying in his preface that the Word was God? (John i. 14.) Why should Paul have feared to place Christ on the judgment-seat of God, (2 Cor. v. 10,) after he had so openly proclaimed his divinity, when he said that he was God over all, blessed for ever? And to show

how consistent he is in this respect, he elsewhere says that "God was manifest in the flesh," (1 Tim. iii. 16.) If he is God blessed for ever, he therefore it is to whom alone, as Paul affirms in another place, all glory and honour is due. Paul does not disguise this, but openly exclaims, that "being in the form of God, (he) thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation," (Phil. ii. 6.) And lest the wicked should clamour and say that he was a kind of spurious God, John goes farther, and affirms, "This is the true God, and eternal life." Though it ought to be enough for us that he is called God, especially by a witness who distinctly testifies that we have no more gods than one, Paul says, "Though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,) but to us there is but one God," (1 Cor. viii. 5, 6.) When we hear from the same lips that God was manifest in the flesh, that God purchased the Church with his own blood, why do we dream of any second God, to whom he makes not the least allusion? And there is no room to doubt that all the godly entertained the same view. Thomas, by addressing him as his Lord and God, certainly professes that he was the only God whom he had ever adored, (John xx. 28.)

12. The divinity of Christ, if judged by the works which are ascribed to him in Scripture, becomes still more evident. When he said of himself, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work," the Jews, though most dull in regard to his other sayings, perceived that he was laying claim to divine power. And, therefore, as John relates, (John v. 17,) they sought the more to kill him, because he not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was his Father, making himself equal with God. What, then, will be our stupidity if we do not perceive from the same passage that his divinity is plainly instructed? To govern the world by his power and providence, and regulate all things by an energy inherent in himself, (this an Apostle ascribes to him, Heb. i. 3,) surely belongs to none but the Creator. Nor does he merely share the government of the world with the Father, but also each of the other offices, which cannot be communicated to creatures.



The Lord proclaims by his prophet, "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake," (Is. xliii. 25.) When, in accordance with this declaration, the Jews thought that injustice was done to God when Christ forgave sins, he not only asserted, in distinct terms, that this power belonged to him, but also proved it by a miracle, (Matth. ix. 6.) We thus see that he possessed in himself not the ministry of forgiving sins, but the inherent power which the Lord declares he will not give to another. What! Is it not the province of God alone to penetrate and interrogate the secret thoughts of the heart? But Christ also had this power, and therefore we infer that Christ is God.

13. How clearly and transparently does this appear in his miracles? I admit that similar and equal miracles were performed by the prophets and apostles; but there is this very essential difference, that they dispensed the gifts of God as his ministers, whereas he exerted his own inherent might. Sometimes, indeed, he used prayer, that he might ascribe glory to the Father, but we see that for the most part his own proper power is displayed. And how should not he be the true author of miracles, who, of his own authority, commissions others to perform them? For the Evangelist relates that he gave power to the apostles to cast out devils, cure the lepers, raise the dead, &c. And they, by the mode in which they performed this ministry, showed plainly that their whole power was derived from Christ. "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth," says Peter, (Acts iii. 6,) "rise up and walk." It is not surprising, then, that Christ appealed to his miracles in order to subdue the unbelief of the Jews, inasmuch as these were performed by his own energy, and therefore bore the most ample testimony to his divinity.

Again, if out of God there is no salvation, no righteousness, no life, Christ, having all these in himself, is certainly God. Let no one object that life or salvation is transfused into him by God. For it is said not that he received, but that he himself is salvation. And if there is none good but God, how could a mere man be pure, how could he be, I say not good and just, but goodness and justice? Then what shall we say to the testimony of the Evangelist, that from



the very beginning of the creation “in him was life, and this life was the light of men?” Trusting to such proofs, we can boldly put our hope and faith in him, though we know it is blasphemous impiety to confide in any creature.<sup>1</sup> “Ye believe in God,”<sup>2</sup> says he, “believe also in me,” (John xiv. 1.) And so Paul (Rom. x. 11, and xv. 12) interprets two passages of Isaiah, “Whoso believeth in him shall not be confounded,” (Isa. xxviii. 16;) and, “In that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek,” (Isa. xi. 10.) But why adduce more passages of Scripture on this head, when we so often meet with the expression, “He that believeth in me hath eternal life?”

Again, the prayer of faith is addressed to him—prayer, which specially belongs to the divine majesty, if anything so belongs. For the Prophet Joel says, “And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord (Jehovah) shall be delivered,” (Joel ii. 32.) And another says, “The name of the Lord (Jehovah) is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it and is safe,” (Prov. xviii. 10.) But the name of Christ is invoked for salvation, and therefore it follows that he is Jehovah. Moreover, we have an example of invocation in Stephen, when he said, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit;” and thereafter in the whole Church, when Ananias says in the same book, “Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem; and here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name,” (Acts ix. 13, 14.) And to make it more clearly understood that in Christ dwelt the whole fulness of the Godhead bodily, the Apostle declares that the only doctrine which he professed to the Corinthians, the only doctrine which he taught, was the knowledge of Christ, (1 Cor. ii. 2.) Consider what kind of thing it is, and how great, that the name of the Son alone is preached to us, though God command us to glory only

<sup>1</sup> The French adds, “Et ne faisons point cela témérement, mais selon sa parole.”—And let us not do this rashly, but in accordance with his Word.

<sup>2</sup> Calvin translates interrogatively, “Do ye believe in God?”

in the knowledge of himself, (Jer. ix. 24.) Who will dare to maintain that he, whom to know forms our only ground of glorying, is a mere creature? To this we may add, that the salutations prefixed to the Epistles of Paul pray for the same blessings from the Son as from the Father. By this we are taught, not only that the blessings which our heavenly Father bestows come to us through his intercession, but that by a partnership in power, the Son himself is their author. This practical knowledge is doubtless surer and more solid than any idle speculation. For the pious soul has the best view of God, and may almost be said to handle him, when it feels that it is quickened, enlightened, saved, justified, and sanctified by him.

14. In asserting the divinity of the Spirit, the proof must be derived from the same sources. And it is by no means an obscure testimony which Moses bears in the history of the creation, when he says that the Spirit of God was expanded over the abyss or shapeless matter; for it shows not only that the beauty which the world displays is maintained by the invigorating power of the Spirit, but that even before this beauty existed the Spirit was at work cherishing the confused mass.<sup>1</sup> Again, no cavils can explain away the force of what Isaiah says, "And now the Lord God, and his Spirit, hath sent me," (Isa. xlvi. 16,) thus ascribing a share in the sovereign power of sending the prophets to the Holy Spirit. (Calvin in Acts xx. 28.) In this his divine majesty is clear.

But, as I observed, the best proof to us is our familiar experience. For nothing can be more alien from a creature, than the office which the Scriptures ascribe to him, and which the pious actually feel him discharging,—his being diffused over all space, sustaining, invigorating, and quickening all things, both in heaven and on the earth. The mere fact of his not being circumscribed by any limits raises him above the rank of creatures, while his transfusing vigour into all things, breathing into them being, life, and motion, is plainly divine. Again, if regeneration to incorruptible life is higher, and much more excellent than any present quicken-

<sup>1</sup> The French adds, "à ce qu'elle ne fust point aneantie incontinent;"—so as to prevent its being instantly annihilated.

ing, what must be thought of him by whose energy it is produced? Now, many passages of Scripture show that he is the author of regeneration, not by a borrowed, but by an intrinsic energy; and not only so, but that he is also the author of future immortality. In short, all the peculiar attributes of the Godhead are ascribed to him in the same way as to the Son. He searches the deep things of God, and has no counsellor among the creatures; he bestows wisdom and the faculty of speech, though God declares to Moses (Exod. iv. 11) that this is his own peculiar province. In like manner, by means of him we become partakers of the divine nature, so as in a manner to feel his quickening energy within us. Our justification is his work; from him is power, sanctification, truth, grace, and every good thought, since it is from the Spirit alone that all good gifts proceed. Particular attention is due to Paul's expression, that though there are diversities of gifts, "all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit," (1 Cor. xii. 11,) he being not only the beginning or origin, but also the author;<sup>1</sup> as is even more clearly expressed immediately after, in these words, "dividing to every man severally as he will." For were he not something subsisting in God, will and arbitrary disposal would never be ascribed to him. Most clearly, therefore, does Paul ascribe divine power to the Spirit, and demonstrate that he dwells hypostatically in God.

15. Nor does the Scripture, in speaking of him, withhold the name of God. Paul infers that we are the temple of God, from the fact that "the Spirit of God dwelleth in us," (1 Cor. iii. 16; vi. 19; and 2 Cor. vi. 16.) Now, it ought not to be slightly overlooked, that all the promises which God makes of choosing us to himself as a temple, receive their only fulfilment by his Spirit dwelling in us. Surely, as it is admirably expressed by Augustine, (Ad Maximinum, Ep. 66,) "were we ordered to make a temple of wood and stone to the Spirit, inasmuch as such worship is due to God alone, it would be a clear proof of the Spirit's divinity; how much

<sup>1</sup> The French adds, "Saint Paul n'eust jamais ainsi parlé, s'il n'eust connu la vraie Divinité du Saint Esprit."—St Paul would never have so spoken, if he had not known the divinity of the Holy Spirit.



clearer a proof in that we are not to make a temple to him, but to be ourselves that temple." And the Apostle says at one time that we are the temple of God, and at another time, in the same sense, that we are the temple of the Holy Spirit. Peter, when he rebuked Ananias for having lied to the Holy Spirit, said, that he had not lied unto men, but unto God. And when Isaiah had introduced the Lord of Hosts as speaking, Paul says, it was the Holy Spirit that spoke, (Acts xxviii. 25, 26.) Nay, words uniformly said by the prophets to have been spoken by the Lord of Hosts, are by Christ and his apostles ascribed to the Holy Spirit. Hence it follows that the Spirit is the true Jehovah, who dictated the prophecies. Again, when God complains that he was provoked to anger by the stubbornness of the people, in place of Him, Isaiah says that his Holy Spirit was grieved, (Isa. lxiii. 10.) Lastly, while blasphemy against the Spirit is not forgiven, either in the present life or that which is to come, whereas he who has blasphemed against the Son may obtain pardon, that majesty must certainly be divine which it is an inexpressible crime to offend or impair. I designedly omit several passages which the ancient fathers adduced. They thought it plausible to quote from David, "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath (Spirit) of his mouth," (Ps. xxxiii. 6,) in order to prove that the world was not less the work of the Holy Spirit than of the Son. But seeing it is usual in the Psalms to repeat the same thing twice, and in Isaiah the *spirit* (breath) of the mouth is equivalent to *word*, that proof was weak; and, accordingly, my wish has been to advert briefly to those proofs on which pious minds may securely rest.

16. But as God has manifested himself more clearly by the advent of Christ, so he has made himself more familiarly known in three persons. Of many proofs let this one suffice. Paul connects together these three, God, Faith, and Baptism, and reasons from the one to the other, viz., because there is one faith he infers that there is one God; and because there is one baptism he infers that there is one faith. Therefore, if by baptism we are initiated into the faith and worship of one God, we must of necessity believe that he into whose



name we are baptized is the true God. And there cannot be a doubt that our Saviour wished to testify, by a solemn rehearsal, that the perfect light of faith is now exhibited, when he said, "Go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit," (Matth. xxviii. 19,) since this is the same thing as to be baptized into the name of the one God, who has been fully manifested in the Father, the Son, and the Spirit. Hence it plainly appears, that the three persons, in whom alone God is known, subsist in the Divine essence. And since faith certainly ought not to look hither and thither, or run up and down after various objects, but to look, refer, and cleave to God alone, it is obvious that were there various kinds of faith, there behoved also to be various gods. Then, as the baptism of faith is a sacrament, its unity assures us of the unity of God. Hence, also, it is proved that it is lawful only to be baptized into one God, because we make a profession of faith in him in whose name we are baptized. What, then, is our Saviour's meaning in commanding baptism to be administered in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, if it be not that we are to believe with one faith in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit?<sup>1</sup> But is this any thing else than to declare that the Father, Son, and Spirit, are one God? Wherefore, since it must be held certain that there is one God, not more than one, we conclude that the Word and Spirit are of the very essence of God. Nothing could be more stupid than the trifling of the Arians, who, while acknowledging the divinity of the Son, denied his divine essence. Equally extravagant were the ravings of the Macedonians, who insisted that by the Spirit were only meant the gifts of grace poured out upon men. For as wisdom, understanding, prudence, fortitude, and the fear of the Lord, proceed from the Spirit, so he is the one Spirit of wisdom, prudence, fortitude, and piety. He is not divided according to the distribution of his gifts, but, as the Apostle assures us, (1 Cor. xii. 11,) however they be divided, he remains one and the same.

<sup>1</sup> The French entirely omits the three previous sentences, beginning, "Then, as," &c.

17. On the other hand, the Scriptures demonstrate that there is some distinction between the Father and the Word, the Word and the Spirit; but the magnitude of the mystery reminds us of the great reverence and soberness which ought to be employed in discussing it. It seems to me, that nothing can be more admirable than the words of Gregory Nanzianzen: “*Ὁὐ φθάνω τοῖς νοῆσαι, καὶ τοῖς τρεῖσι περιλάμφομαι οὐ φθάνω τὰ τρία διελεῖν καὶ εἰς τὸ ἐν ἀναφέρωμαι,*” (Greg. Nanzian. in Serm. de Sacro Baptis.) “I cannot think of the unity without being irradiated by the Trinity: I cannot distinguish between the Trinity without being carried up to the unity.”<sup>1</sup> Therefore, let us beware of imagining such a Trinity of persons as will distract our thoughts, instead of bringing them instantly back to the unity. The words, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, certainly indicate a real distinction, not allowing us to suppose that they are merely epithets by which God is variously designated from his works. Still they indicate distinction only, not division. The passages we have already quoted show that the Son has a distinct subsistence from the Father, because the Word could not have been with God unless he were distinct from the Father; nor but for this could he have had his glory with the Father. In like manner, Christ distinguishes the Father from himself, when he says that there is another who bears witness of him, (John v. 32; viii. 16.) To the same effect is it elsewhere said, that the Father made all things by the Word. This could not be, if he were not in some respect distinct from him. Besides, it was not the Father that descended to the earth, but he who came forth from the Father; nor was it the Father that died and rose again, but he whom the Father had sent. This distinction did not take its beginning at the incarnation: for it is clear that the only begotten Son previously existed in the bosom of the Father, (John i. 18.) For who will dare to affirm that the Son entered his Father’s bosom for the first time, when he came down from heaven to assume human nature? There-

<sup>1</sup> Bernard, De Consider. lib. v. “Cum dico unum, non me trinitatis turbat numerus, qui essentiam non multiplicat, non variat, nec partitur. Rursum, quum dico tria, non me arguit intuitus unitatis, quia illa quæcunque tria, seu illos tres, nec in confusionem cogit, nec in singularitatem redigit.”—See also Bernard, Serm. 71, in Cantica.

fore, he was previously in the bosom of the Father, and had his glory with the Father. Christ intimates the distinction between the Holy Spirit and the Father, when he says that the Spirit proceedeth from the Father, and between the Holy Spirit and himself, when he speaks of him as another, as he does when he declares that he will send another Comforter ; and in many other passages besides, (John xiv. 6 ; xv. 26 ; xiv. 16.)

18. I am not sure whether it is expedient to borrow analogies from human affairs to express the nature of this distinction. The ancient fathers sometimes do so, but they at the same time admit, that what they bring forward as analogous is very widely different. And hence it is that I have a great dread of any thing like presumption here, lest some rash saying may furnish an occasion of calumny to the malicious, or of delusion to the unlearned. It were unbecoming, however, to say nothing of a distinction which we observe that the Scriptures have pointed out. This distinction is, that to the Father is attributed the beginning of action, the fountain and source of all things ; to the Son, wisdom, counsel, and arrangement in action, while the energy and efficacy of action is assigned to the Spirit. Moreover, though the eternity of the Father is also the eternity of the Son and Spirit, since God never could be without his own wisdom and energy ; and though in eternity there can be no room for first or last, still the distinction of order is not unmeaning or superfluous, the Father being considered first, next the Son from him, and then the Spirit from both. For the mind of every man naturally inclines to consider, first, God, secondly, the wisdom emerging from him, and, lastly, the energy by which he executes the purposes of his counsel. For this reason, the Son is said to be of the Father only ; the Spirit of both the Father and the Son. This is done in many passages, but in none more clearly than in the eighth chapter to the Romans, where the same Spirit is called indiscriminately the Spirit of Christ, and the Spirit of him who raised up Christ from the dead. And not improperly. For Peter also testifies, (1 Pet. i. 21,) that it was the Spirit of Christ which



inspired the prophets, though the Scriptures so often say that it was the Spirit of God the Father.

19. Moreover, this distinction is so far from interfering with the most perfect unity of God, that the Son may thereby be proved to be one God with the Father, in as much as he constitutes one Spirit with him, and that the Spirit is not different from the Father and the Son, in as much as he is the Spirit of the Father and the Son. In each hypostasis the whole nature is understood, the only difference being that each has his own peculiar subsistence. The whole Father is in the Son, and the whole Son in the Father, as the Son himself also declares, (John xiv. 10,) "I am in the Father, and the Father in me;" nor do ecclesiastical writers admit that the one is separated from the other by any difference of essence. "By those names which denote distinction," says Augustine, "is meant the relation which they mutually bear to each other, not the very substance by which they are one." In this way, the sentiments of the Fathers, which might sometimes appear to be at variance with each other, are to be reconciled. At one time they teach that the Father is the beginning of the Son, at another they assert that the Son has both divinity and essence from himself, and therefore is one beginning with the Father. The cause of this discrepancy is well and clearly explained by Augustine, when he says,<sup>1</sup> "Christ, as to himself, is called God, as to the Father he is called Son." And again, "The Father, as to himself, is called God, as to the Son he is called Father. He who, as to the Son, is called Father, is not Son; and he who, as to himself, is called Father, and he who, as to himself, is called Son, is the same God." Therefore, when we speak of the Son simply, without reference to the Father, we truly and properly affirm that he is of himself, and, accordingly, call him the only beginning; but when we denote the relation which he bears to the Father, we correctly make the Father the

<sup>1</sup> August. Homil. De Temp. 38, De Trinitate. See also Ad Pascen-tium Epist. 174; Cyrill. De Trinit. lib. vii.; Idem, lib. iii. Dialog.; Aug. in Psal. cix.; et Tract. in Joann. 39; Idem, in Psal. lxxviii.



beginning of the Son. Augustine's fifth book on the Trinity is wholly devoted to the explanation of this subject. But it is far safer to rest contented with the relation as taught by him, than get bewildered in vain speculation by subtle prying into a sublime mystery.

20. Let those, then, who love soberness, and are contented with the measure of faith, briefly receive what is useful to be known. It is as follows:—When we profess to believe in one God, by the name God is understood the one simple essence, comprehending three persons or hypostases; and, accordingly, whenever the name of God is used indefinitely, the Son and Spirit, not less than the Father, is meant. But when the Son is joined with the Father, relation comes into view, and so we distinguish between the Persons. But as the Personal subsistences carry an order with them, the principle and origin being in the Father, whenever mention is made of the Father and Son, or of the Father and Spirit together, the name of God is specially given to the Father. In this way the unity of essence is retained, and respect is had to the order, which, however, derogates in no respect from the divinity of the Son and Spirit. And surely since we have already seen how the apostles declare the Son of God to have been He whom Moses and the prophets declared to be Jehovah, we must always arrive at an unity of essence. We, therefore, hold it detestable blasphemy to call the Son a different God from the Father, because the simple name God admits not of relation, nor can God, considered in himself, be said to be this or that. Then, that the name Jehovah, taken indefinitely, may be applied to Christ, is clear from the words of Paul, “For this thing I besought the Lord thrice.” After giving the answer, “My grace is sufficient for thee,” he subjoins, “that the power of Christ may rest upon me,” (2 Cor. xii. 8, 9.) For it is certain that the name of Lord (*Κύριος*) is there put for Jehovah, and, therefore, to restrict it to the person of the Mediator were puerile and frivolous, the words being used absolutely, and not with the view of comparing the Father and the Son. And we know that, in accordance with the received usage of the Greeks, the apostles uniformly substitute the word *Κυρίος* for

Jehovah. Not to go far for an example, Paul besought the Lord in the same sense in which Peter quotes the passage of Joel, "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved," (Acts ii. 21; Joel ii. 28.) Where this name is specially applied to the Son, there is a different ground for it, as will be seen in its own place; at present it is sufficient to remember, that Paul, after praying to God absolutely, immediately subjoins the name of Christ. Thus, too, the Spirit is called God absolutely by Christ himself. For nothing prevents us from holding that he is the entire spiritual essence of God, in which are comprehended Father, Son, and Spirit. This is plain from Scripture. For as God is there called a Spirit, so the Holy Spirit also, in so far as he is a hypostasis of the whole essence, is said to be both of God and from God.

21. But since Satan, in order to pluck up our faith by the roots, has always provoked fierce disputes, partly concerning the divine essence of the Son and Spirit, and partly concerning the distinction of persons; since in almost every age he has stirred up impious spirits to vex the orthodox doctors on this head, and is attempting in the present day to kindle a new flame out of the old embers, it will be proper here to dispose of some of these perverse dreams. Hitherto our chief object has been to stretch out our hand for the guidance of such as are disposed to learn, not to war with the stubborn and contentious; but now the truth which was calmly demonstrated must be vindicated from the calumnies of the ungodly. Still, however, it will be our principal study to provide a sure footing for those whose ears are open to the word of God. Here, if any where, in considering the hidden mysteries of Scripture, we should speculate soberly and with great moderation, cautiously guarding against allowing either our mind or our tongue to go a step beyond the confines of God's word. For how can the human mind, which has not yet been able to ascertain of what the body of the sun consists, though it is daily presented to the eye, bring down the boundless essence of God to its little measure? Nay, how can it, under its own guidance, penetrate to a knowledge of the substance of God while unable to under-

stand its own? Wherefore, let us willingly leave to God the knowledge of himself. In the words of Hilary, (*De Trinit. lib. i.*,) "He alone is a fit witness to himself who is known only by himself." This knowledge, then, if we would leave to God, we must conceive of him as he has made himself known, and in our inquiries make application to no other quarter than his word. On this subject we have five homilies of Chrysostom against the *Anomœi*, (*De Incomprehensit. Dei Natura*,) in which he endeavoured, but in vain, to check the presumption of the sophists, and curb their garrulity. They showed no more modesty here than they are wont to do in everything else. The very unhappy results of their temerity should be a warning to us to bring more docility than acumen to the discussion of this question, never to attempt to search after God anywhere but in his sacred word, and never to speak or think of him farther than we have it for our guide. But if the distinction of Father, Son, and Spirit, subsisting in the one Godhead, (certainly a subject of great difficulty,) gives more trouble and annoyance to some intellects than is meet, let us remember that the human mind enters a labyrinth whenever it indulges its curiosity, and thus submit to be guided by the divine oracles, how much soever the mystery may be beyond our reach.

22. It were tedious, and to no purpose toilsome, to form a catalogue of the errors by which, in regard to this branch of doctrine, the purity of the faith has been assailed. The greater part of heretics have with their gross deliriums made a general attack on the glory of God, deeming it enough if they could disturb and shake the unwary. From a few individuals numerous sects have sprung up, some of them rending the divine essence, and others confounding the distinction of Persons. But if we hold, what has already been demonstrated from Scripture, that the essence of the one God, pertaining to the Father, Son, and Spirit, is simple and indivisible, and again, that the Father differs in some special property from the Son, and the Son from the Spirit, the door will be shut against Arius and Sabelius, as well as the other ancient authors of error. But as



in our day have arisen certain frantic men, such as Servetus and others, who, by new devices, have thrown every thing into confusion, it may be worth while briefly to discuss their fallacies.

The name of Trinity was so much disliked, nay detested, by Servetus, that he charged all whom he called Trinitarians with being Atheists. I say nothing of the insulting terms in which he thought proper to make his charges. The sum of his speculations was, that a threefold Deity is introduced wherever three Persons are said to exist in his essence, and that this Triad was imaginary, in as much as it was inconsistent with the unity of God. At the same time, he would have it that the Persons are certain external ideas which do not truly subsist in the Divine essence, but only figure God to us under this or that form: that at first, indeed, there was no distinction in God, because originally the Word was the same as the Spirit, but ever since Christ came forth God of God, another Spirit, also a God, had proceeded from him. But although he sometimes cloaks his absurdities in allegory, as when he says that the eternal Word of God was the Spirit of Christ with God, and the reflection of the idea, likewise that the Spirit was a shadow of Deity, he at last reduces the divinity of both to nothing; maintaining that, according to the mode of distribution, there is a part of God as well in the Son as in the Spirit, just as the same Spirit substantially is a portion of God in us, and also in wood and stone. His absurd babbling concerning the person of the Mediator will be seen in its own place.<sup>1</sup>

The monstrous fiction that a Person is nothing else than a visible appearance of the glory of God, needs not a long refutation. For when John declares that before the world was created the Logos was God, (John i. 1,) he shows that he was something very different from an idea. But if even then, and from the remotest eternity, that Logos, who was God, was with the Father, and had his own distinct and

<sup>1</sup> See Calvin. Defensio Orthodox. Fid. S. Trinit. Adv. Prod. Error. M. Serveti.



peculiar glory with the Father, (John xvii. 5,) he certainly could not be an external or figurative splendour, but must necessarily have been a hypostasis which dwelt inherently in God himself. But although there is no mention made of the Spirit antecedent to the account of the creation, he is not there introduced as a shadow, but as the essential power of God, where Moses relates that the shapeless mass was upborne by him, (Gen. i. 2.) It is obvious that the eternal Spirit always existed in God, seeing he cherished and sustained the confused materials of heaven and earth before they possessed order or beauty. Assuredly he could not then be an image or representation of God, as Servetus dreams. But he is elsewhere forced to make a more open disclosure of his impiety when he says, that God by his eternal reason decreeing a Son to himself, in this way assumed a visible appearance. For if this be true, no other Divinity is left to Christ than is implied in his having been ordained a Son by God's eternal decree. Moreover, those phantoms which Servetus substitutes for the hypostases he so transforms as to make new changes in God. But the most execrable heresy of all is his confounding both the Son and Spirit promiscuously with all the creatures. For he distinctly asserts, that there are parts and partitions in the essence of God, and that every such portion is God. This he does especially when he says, that the spirits of the faithful are co-eternal and consubstantial with God, although he elsewhere assigns a substantial divinity, not only to the soul of man, but to all created things.

23. This pool has bred another monster not unlike the former. For certain restless spirits, unwilling to share the disgrace and obloquy of the impiety of Servetus, have confessed that there were indeed three Persons, but added, as a reason, that the Father, who alone is truly and properly God, transfused his Divinity into the Son and Spirit when he formed them. Nor do they refrain from expressing themselves in such shocking terms as these: that the Father is essentially distinguished from the Son and Spirit by this; that he is the only *essentiator*. Their first pretext for this is, that Christ is uniformly called the Son of God. From

this they infer, that there is no proper God but the Father. But they forget, that although the name of God is common also to the Son, yet it is sometimes, by way of excellence, ascribed to the Father, as being the source and principle of Divinity; and this is done in order to mark the simple unity of essence. They object, that if the Son is truly God, he must be deemed the Son of a person: which is absurd. I answer, that both are true; namely, that he is the Son of God, because he is the Word, begotten of the Father before all ages; (for we are not now speaking of the Person of the Mediator,) and yet, that for the purpose of explanation, regard must be had to the Person, so that the name God may not be understood in its absolute sense, but as equivalent to Father. For if we hold that there is no other God than the Father, this rank is clearly denied to the Son.

In every case where the Godhead is mentioned, we are by no means to admit that there is an antithesis between the Father and the Son, as if to the former only the name of God could competently be applied. For assuredly, the God who appeared to Isaiah was the one true God, and yet John declares that he was Christ, (Isa. vi.; John xii. 41.) He who declared, by the mouth of Isaiah, that he was to be "for a stone of stumbling" to the Jews, was the one God; and yet Paul declares that he was Christ, (Isa. viii. 14; Rom. ix. 33.) He who proclaims by Isaiah, "Unto me every knee shall bow," is the one God; yet Paul again explains that he is Christ, (Isa. xlv. 23; Rom. xiv. 11.) To this we may add the passages quoted by an Apostle, "Thou, Lord, hast laid the foundations of the earth;" "Let all the angels of God worship him," (Heb. i. 10; x. 6; Ps. cii. 26; xcvi. 7.) All these apply to the one God; and yet the Apostle contends that they are the proper attributes of Christ. There is nothing in the cavil, that what properly applies to God is transferred to Christ, because he is the brightness of his glory. Since the name of Jehovah is everywhere applied to Christ, it follows that, in regard to Deity, he is of himself. For if he is Jehovah, it is impossible to deny that he is the same God who elsewhere proclaims by Isaiah, "I am the

first, and I am the last ; and beside me there is no God," (Is. xlv. 6.) We would also do well to ponder the words of Jeremiah, "The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth and from under these heavens," (Jer. x. 11;) whence it follows conversely, that He whose divinity Isaiah repeatedly proves from the creation of the world, is none other than the Son of God. And how is it possible that the Creator, who gives to all, should not be of himself, but should borrow his essence from another? Whosoever says that the Son was *essentiated* by the Father,<sup>1</sup> denies his self-existence. Against this, however, the Holy Spirit protests, when he calls him Jehovah. On the supposition, then, that the whole essence is in the Father only, the essence becomes divisible, or is denied to the Son, who, being thus robbed of his essence, will be only a titular God. If we are to believe these triflers, divine essence belongs to the Father only, on the ground that he is sole God, and *essentiator* of the Son. In this way, the divinity of the Son will be something abstracted<sup>2</sup> from the essence of God, or the derivation of a part from the whole. On the same principle it must also be conceded, that the Spirit belongs to the Father only. For if the derivation is from the primary essence which is proper to none but the Father, the Spirit cannot justly be deemed the Spirit of the Son. This view, however, is refuted by the testimony of Paul, when he makes the Spirit common both to Christ and the Father. Moreover, if the Person of the Father is expunged from the Trinity, in what will he differ from the Son and Spirit, except in being the only God? They confess that Christ is God, and that he differs from the Father. If he differs, there must be some mark of distinction between them. Those who place it in the essence, manifestly reduce the true divinity of Christ to nothing, since divinity cannot exist without essence, and indeed without entire essence.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The French adds, "(puisque tels abuseurs forgent des noms contre nature ;)"—(for these perverters forge names against nature.)

<sup>2</sup> The French is, "tiré comme par un alambic ;"—extracted as by an alembic.

<sup>3</sup> See Bernard, Serm. 80, super Cantica., on the heresy of Gilbert, Bishop of Poitiers.



The Father certainly cannot differ from the Son, unless he have something peculiar to himself, and not common to him with the Son. What, then, do these men show as the mark of distinction? If it is in the essence, let them tell whether or not he communicated essence to the Son. This he could not do in part merely, for it were impious to think of a divided God. And besides, on this supposition, there would be a rending of the Divine essence. The whole entire essence must therefore be common to the Father and the Son; and if so, in respect of essence there is no distinction between them. If they reply that the Father, while essentiating, still remains the only God, being the possessor of the essence, then Christ will be a figurative God, one in name or semblance only, and not in reality, because no property can be more peculiar to God than essence, according to the words, "I AM hath sent me unto you," (Ex. iii. 4.)

24. The assumption, that whenever God is mentioned absolutely, the Father only is meant, may be proved erroneous by many passages. Even in those which they quote in support of their views they betray a lamentable inconsistency, because the name of Son occurs there by way of contrast, showing that the other name God is used relatively, and in that way confined to the person of the Father. Their objection may be disposed of in a single word. Were not the Father alone the true God, he would, say they, be his own Father. But there is nothing absurd in the name of God being specially applied, in respect of order and degree, to him who not only of himself begat his own wisdom, but is the God of the Mediator, as I will more fully show in its own place. For ever since Christ was manifested in the flesh he is called the Son of God, not only because begotten of the Father before all worlds he was the Eternal Word, but because he undertook the person and office of the Mediator that he might unite us to God. Seeing they are so bold in excluding the Son from the honour of God, I would fain know whether, when he declares that there is "none good but one, that is, God," he deprives himself of goodness. I speak not of his human nature, lest perhaps they should



object, that whatever goodness was in it was derived by gratuitous gift : I ask whether the Eternal Word of God is good, yes or no? If they say no, their impiety is manifest ; if yes, they refute themselves. Christ's seeming at the first glance to disclaim the name of good, (Matth. xix. 17,) rather confirms our view. Goodness being the special property of God alone, and yet being at the time applied to him in the ordinary way of salutation, his rejection of false honour intimates that the goodness in which he excels is Divine. Again, I ask whether, when Paul affirms that God alone is " immortal," " wise, and true," (1 Tim. i. 17,) he reduces Christ to the rank of beings mortal, foolish, and false. Is not he immortal, who, from the beginning, had life so as to bestow immortality on angels? Is not he wise who is the eternal wisdom of God? Is not he true who is truth itself?

I ask, moreover, whether they think Christ should be worshipped. If he claims justly, that every knee shall bow to him, it follows that he is the God who, in the law, forbade worship to be offered to any but himself. If they insist on applying to the Father only the words of Isaiah, " I am, and besides me there is none else," (Is. xlv. 6,) I turn the passage against themselves, since we see that every property of God is attributed to Christ.<sup>1</sup> There is no room for the cavil that Christ was exalted in the flesh in which he humbled himself, and in respect of which all power is given to him in heaven and on earth. For although the majesty of King and Judge extends to the whole person of the Mediator, yet had he not been God manifested in the flesh, he could not have been exalted to such a height without coming into collision with God. And the dispute is admirably settled by Paul, when he declares that he was equal with God before he humbled himself, and assumed the form of a servant, (Phil. ii. 6, 7.) Moreover, how could such equality exist, if he were not that God whose name is Jah and Jehovah, who rides upon the cherubim, is King of all the

<sup>1</sup> The French is expressed somewhat differently, "*veu que l'Apostre en l'allegant de Christ, lui attribue tout ce qui est de Dieu ;*"—seeing the Apostle, by applying it to Christ, attributes to him every thing belonging to God.

earth, and King of ages? Let them clamour as they may, Christ cannot be robbed of the honour described by Isaiah, "Lo, this is our God ; we have waited for him," (Is. xxv. 9 ;) for these words describe the advent of God the Redeemer, who was not only to bring back the people from Babylonish captivity, but restore the Church, and make her completely perfect.

Nor does another cavil avail them, that Christ was God in his Father. For though we admit that, in respect of order and gradation, the beginning of divinity is in the Father, we hold it a detestable fiction to maintain that essence is proper to the Father alone, as if he were the deifier of the Son. On this view either the essence is manifold, or Christ is God only in name and imagination. If they grant that the Son is God, but only in subordination to the Father, the essence which in the Father is unformed and unbegotten will in him be formed and begotten. I know that many who would be thought wise deride us for extracting the distinction of persons from the words of Moses when he introduces God as saying, "Let us make man in our own image," (Gen. i. 26.) Pious readers, however, see how frigidly and absurdly the colloquy were introduced by Moses, if there were not several persons in the Godhead. It is certain that those whom the Father addresses must have been uncreated. But nothing is uncreated except the one God. Now then, unless they concede that the power of creating was common to the Father, Son, and Spirit, and the power of commanding common, it will follow that God did not speak thus inwardly with himself, but addressed other extraneous architects. In fine, there is a single passage which will at once dispose of these two objections. The declaration of Christ that "God is a Spirit," (John iv. 24,) cannot be confined to the Father only, as if the Word were not of a spiritual nature. But if the name Spirit applies equally to the Son as to the Father, I infer that under the indefinite name of God the Son is included. He adds immediately after, that the only worshippers approved by the Father are those who worship him in spirit and in truth ; and hence I also infer, that because Christ performs the office of teacher under a head, he applies the name God

to the Father, not for the purpose of destroying his own Divinity, but for the purpose of raising us up to it as it were step by step.

25. The hallucination consists in dreaming of individuals, each of whom possesses a part of the essence. The Scriptures teach that there is essentially but one God, and, therefore, that the essence both of the Son and Spirit is unbegotten; but inasmuch as the Father is first in order, and of himself begat his own Wisdom, he, as we lately observed, is justly regarded as the principle and fountain of all the Godhead. Thus God, taken indefinitely, is unbegotten, and the Father, in respect of his person, is unbegotten. For it is absurd to imagine that our doctrine gives any ground for alleging that we establish a quaternion of gods. They falsely and calumniously ascribe to us the figment of their own brain, as if we virtually held that three persons emanate from one essence,<sup>1</sup> whereas it is plain, from our writings, that we do not disjoin the persons from the essence, but interpose a distinction between the persons residing in it. If the persons were separated from the essence, there might be some plausibility in their argument; as in this way there would be a trinity of Gods, not of persons comprehended in one God. This affords an answer to their futile question—whether or not the essence concurs in forming the Trinity; as if we imagined that three Gods were derived from it. Their objection, that there would thus be a Trinity without a God, originates in the same absurdity. Although the essence does not contribute to the distinction, as if it were a part or member, the persons are not without it, or external to it; for the Father, if he were not God, could not be the Father; nor could the Son possibly be Son unless he were God. We say, then, that the Godhead is absolutely of itself. And hence also we hold that the Son, regarded as God, and without reference to person, is also of himself; though we also say that, regarded as Son, he is of the Father. Thus his essence is without beginning, while his person has its beginning in God. And, indeed, the orthodox writers who in former times spoke of the Trinity, used this term only with

<sup>1</sup> The French adds, “Comme trois ruisseaux;”—like three streams.



reference to the Persons. To have included the essence in the distinction, would not only have been an absurd error, but gross impiety. For those who class the three thus—Essence, Son, and Spirit<sup>1</sup>—plainly do away with the essence of the Son and Spirit; otherwise the parts being intermingled would merge into each other—a circumstance which would vitiate any distinction.<sup>2</sup> In short, if God and Father were synonymous terms, the Father would be deifier in a sense which would leave the Son nothing but a shadow; and the Trinity would be nothing more than the union of one God with two creatures.

26. To the objection, that if Christ be properly God, he is improperly called the Son of God, it has been already answered, that when one person is compared with another, the name God is not used indefinitely, but is restricted to the Father, regarded as the beginning of the Godhead, not by *essentiating*, as fanatics absurdly express it, but in respect of order. In this sense are to be understood the words which Christ addressed to the Father, “This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent,” (John xvii. 3.) For speaking in the person of the Mediator, he holds a middle place between God and man; yet so that his majesty is not diminished thereby. For though he humbled (emptied) himself, he did not lose the glory which he had with the Father, though it was concealed from the world. So in the Epistle to the Hebrews, (Heb. i. 10; ii. 9,) though the apostle confesses that Christ was made a little lower than the angels, he at the same time hesitates not to assert that he is the eternal God who founded the earth. We must hold, therefore, that as often as Christ, in the character of Mediator, addresses the Father, he, under the term God, includes his own divinity also. Thus, when he says to the apostles, “It is expe-

<sup>1</sup> The French adds, “Comme si l’essence étoit au lieu de la personne du Pere;”—as if the essence were in place of the person of the Father.

<sup>2</sup> The French is somewhat differently expressed: “Car le Fils a quelque l’estre, ou il n’en a point. S’il en a, voila deux essences pour jouter l’un contre autre; s’il n’en a point, ce ne seroit qu’une ombre.” For the Son has some being, or he has none. If some, here are two essences to tilt with each other; if none, he is only a shadow.



dient for you that I go away," "My Father is greater than I," he does not attribute to himself a secondary divinity merely, as if in regard to eternal essence he were inferior to the Father; but having obtained celestial glory, he gathers together the faithful to share it with him. He places the Father in the higher degree, inasmuch as the full perfection of brightness conspicuous in heaven, differs from that measure of glory which he himself displayed when clothed in flesh. For the same reason Paul says, that Christ will restore "the kingdom to God, even the Father," "that God may be all in all," (1 Cor. xv. 24, 28.) Nothing can be more absurd than to deny the perpetuity of Christ's divinity. But if he will never cease to be the Son of God, but will ever remain the same that he was from the beginning, it follows that under the name of Father the one divine essence common to both is comprehended. And assuredly Christ descended to us for the very purpose of raising us to the Father, and thereby, at the same time, raising us to himself, inasmuch as he is one with the Father. It is therefore erroneous and impious to confine the name of God to the Father, so as to deny it to the Son. Accordingly, John, declaring that he is the true God, has no idea of placing him beneath the Father in a subordinate rank of divinity. I wonder what these fabricators of new gods mean, when they confess that Christ is truly God, and yet exclude him from the godhead of the Father, as if there could be any true God but the one God, or as if transfused divinity were not a mere modern fiction.

27. In the many passages which they collect from Irenæus, in which he maintains that the Father of Christ is the only eternal God of Israel, they betray shameful ignorance, or very great dishonesty. For they ought to have observed, that that holy man was contending against certain frantic persons, who, denying that the Father of Christ was that God who had in old times spoken by Moses and the prophets, held that he was some phantom or other produced from the pollution of the world. His whole object, therefore, is to make it plain, that in the Scriptures no other God is announced but the Father of Christ; that it is wicked to

imagine any other. Accordingly, there is nothing strange in his so often concluding that the God of Israel was no other than he who is celebrated by Christ and the apostles. Now, when a different heresy is to be resisted, we also say with truth, that the God who in old times appeared to the fathers, was no other than Christ. Moreover, if it is objected that he was the Father, we have the answer ready, that while we contend for the divinity of the Son, we by no means exclude the Father. When the reader attends to the purpose of Irenæus, the dispute is at an end. Indeed, we have only to look to lib. iii. c. 6, where the pious writer insists on this one point, "that he who in Scripture is called God absolutely and indefinitely, is truly the only God; and that Christ is called God absolutely." Let us remember (as appears from the whole work, and especially from lib. ii. c. 46,) that the point under discussion was, that the name of Father is not applied enigmatically and parabolically to one who was not truly God. We may add, that in lib. iii. c. 9, he contends that the Son as well as the Father united was the God proclaimed by the prophets and apostles. He afterwards explains (lib. iii. c. 12) how Christ, who is Lord of all, and King and Judge, received power from him who is God of all, namely, in respect of the humiliation by which he humbled himself, even to the death of the cross. At the same time he shortly after affirms, (lib. iii. c. 16,) that the Son is the maker of heaven and earth, who delivered the law by the hand of Moses, and appeared to the fathers. Should any babbler now insist that, according to Irenæus, the Father alone is the God of Israel, I will refer him to a passage in which Irenæus distinctly says, (lib. iii. c. 18, 23,) that Christ is ever one and the same, and also applies to Christ the words of the prophecy of Habakkuk, "God cometh from the south." To the same effect he says, (lib. iv. c. 9,) "Therefore, Christ himself, with the Father, is the God of the living." And in the 12th chapter of the same book he explains that Abraham believed God, because Christ is the maker of heaven and earth, and very God.

28. With no more truth do they claim Tertullian as a

patron. Though his style is sometimes rugged and obscure, he delivers the doctrine which we maintain in no ambiguous manner, namely, that while there is one God, his Word, however, is with dispensation or economy; that there is only one God in unity of substance; but that, nevertheless, by the mystery of dispensation, the unity is arranged into Trinity; that there are three, not in state, but in degree—not in substance, but in form—not in power, but in order.<sup>1</sup> He says, indeed, that he holds the Son to be second to the Father; but he means that the only difference is by distinction. In one place he says the Son is visible; but after he has discoursed on both views, he declares that he is invisible regarded as the Word. In fine, by affirming that the Father is characterised by his own Person, he shows that he is very far from countenancing the fiction which we refute. And although he does not acknowledge any other God than the Father, yet, explaining himself in the immediate context, he shows that he does not speak exclusively in respect of the Son, because he denies that he is a different God from the Father; and, accordingly, that the one supremacy is not violated by the distinction of Person. And it is easy to collect his meaning from the whole tenor of his discourse. For he contends against Praxeas, that although God has three distinct Persons, yet there are not several gods, nor is unity divided. According to the fiction of Praxeas, Christ could not be God without being the Father also; and this is the reason why Tertullian dwells so much on the distinction. When he calls the Word and Spirit a portion of the whole, the expression, though harsh, may be allowed,

<sup>1</sup> Tertullianus, lib. adv. Praxeam:—"Perversitas hæc (Praxeæ scil.) se existimat meram veritatem possidere, dum unicum Deum non alias putat credendum, quam si ipsum eundemque et Patrem et Filium et Spiritum sanctum dicat: quasi non sic quoque unus sit omnia, dum ex uno omnia, per substantiæ scilicet unitatem, et nihilominus custodiatur *οἰκονομία* sacramentum, quæ unitatem in trinitatem disponit, tres dirigens, Patrem, Filium, et Spiritum sanctum. Tres autem non statu, sed gradu: nec substantia, sed forma: nec potestate, sed specie: unius autem substantiæ, et unius status, et unius potestatis: quia unus Deus, ex quo et gradus isti, formæ et species, in nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus sancti deputantur. Quomodo numerum sine divisione patiuntur, procedentes tractatus demonstrabunt," &c.



since it does not refer to the substance, but only" (as Tertullian himself testifies) denotes arrangement and economy which applies to the persons only. Accordingly, he asks, "How many persons, Praxeas, do you think there are, but just as many as there are names for?" In the same way, he shortly after says, "That they may believe the Father and the Son, each in his own name and person." These things, I think, sufficiently refute the effrontery of those who endeavour to blind the simple by pretending the authority of Tertullian.

29. Assuredly, whosoever will compare the writings of the ancient fathers with each other, will not find any thing in Irenæus different from what is taught by those who come after him. Justin is one of the most ancient, and he agrees with us out and out. Let them object that, by him and others, the Father of Christ is called the one God. The same thing is taught by Hilary, who uses the still harsher expression, that Eternity is in the Father. Is it that he may withhold divine essence from the Son? His whole work is a defence of the doctrine which we maintain; and yet these men are not ashamed to produce some kind of mutilated excerpts for the purpose of persuading us that Hilary is a patron of their heresy. With regard to what they pretend as to Ignatius, if they would have it to be of the least importance, let them prove that the apostles enacted laws concerning Lent, and other corruptions. Nothing can be more nauseating than the absurdities which have been published under the name of Ignatius; and therefore, the conduct of those who provide themselves with such masks for deception is the less entitled to toleration.

Moreover, the consent of the ancient fathers clearly appears from this, that in the Council of Nice, no attempt was made by Arius to cloak his heresy by the authority of any approved author; and no Greek or Latin writer apologises as dissenting from his predecessors. It cannot be necessary to observe how carefully Augustine, to whom all these miscreants are most violently opposed, examined all ancient writings, and how reverently he embraced the doctrine taught



by them, (August. lib. de Trinit. &c.) He is most scrupulous in stating the grounds on which he is forced to differ from them, even in the minutest point. On this subject, too, if he finds any thing ambiguous or obscure in other writers, he does not disguise it.<sup>1</sup> And he assumes it as an acknowledged fact, that the doctrine opposed by the Arians was received without dispute from the earliest antiquity. At the same time, he was not ignorant of what some others had previously taught. This is obvious from a single expression. When he says (De Doct. Christ. lib. i.) that "unity is in the Father," will they pretend that he then forgot himself? In another passage, he clears away every such charge, when he calls the Father the beginning of the Godhead, as being from none—thus wisely inferring that the name of God is specially ascribed to the Father, because, unless the beginning were from him, the simple unity of essence could not be maintained. I hope the pious reader will admit that I have now disposed of all the calumnies by which Satan has hitherto attempted to pervert or obscure the pure doctrine of faith. The whole substance of the doctrine has, I trust, been faithfully expounded, if my readers will set bounds to their curiosity, and not long more eagerly than they ought for perplexing disputation. I did not undertake to satisfy those who delight in speculative views, but I have not designedly omitted any thing which I thought adverse to me. At the same time, studying the edification of the Church, I have thought it better not to touch on various topics, which could have yielded little profit, while they must have needlessly burdened and fatigued the reader. For instance, what avails it to discuss, as Lombard does at length, (lib. i. dist. 9,) Whether or not the Father always generates? This idea of continual generation becomes an absurd fiction from the moment it is seen, that from eternity there were three persons in one God.

<sup>1</sup> Athanasius expresses himself thus learnedly and piously :—"On this subject, though you cannot explain yourself, you are not therefore to distrust the Holy Scriptures. It is better, while hesitating through ignorance, to be silent and believe, than not to believe because you hesitate."

## CHAPTER XIV.

IN THE CREATION OF THE WORLD, AND ALL THINGS IN IT,  
THE TRUE GOD DISTINGUISHED BY CERTAIN MARKS FROM  
FICTITIOUS GODS.

In this chapter commences the second part of Book First, viz., the knowledge of man. Certain things premised. I. The creation of the world generally, (s. 1 and 2.) II. The subject of angels considered, (s. 3-13.) III. Of bad angels or devils, (s. 13-20;) and, IV. The practical use to be made of the history of the creation, (s. 20-22.)

*Sections.*

1. The mere fact of creation should lead us to acknowledge God, but to prevent our falling away to Gentile fictions, God has been pleased to furnish a history of the creation. An impious objection, Why the world was not created sooner? Answer to it. Shrewd saying of an old man.
2. For the same reason, the world was created, not in an instant, but in six days. The order of creation described, showing that Adam was not created until God had, with infinite goodness, made ample provision for him.
3. The doctrine concerning angels expounded. 1. That we may learn from them also to acknowledge God. 2. That we may be put on our guard against the errors of the worshippers of angels and the Manichees. Manicheism refuted. Rule of piety.
4. The angels created by God. At what time and in what order it is inexpedient to inquire. The garrulity of the Pseudo-Dionysius.
5. The nature, offices, and various names of angels.
6. Angels the dispensers of the divine beneficence to us.
7. A kind of prefects over kingdoms and provinces, but specially the guardians of the elect. Not certain that every believer is under the charge of a single angel. Enough, that all angels watch over the safety of the Church.
8. The number and orders of angels not defined. Why angels said to be winged.
9. Angels are ministering spirits and spiritual essences.
10. The heathen error of placing angels on the throne of God refuted. 1. By passages of Scripture.
11. Refutation continued. 2. By inferences from other passages. Why God employs the ministry of angels.

12. Use of the doctrine of Scripture concerning the holy angels.
13. The doctrine concerning bad angels or devils reduced to four heads.
  1. That we may guard against their wiles and assaults.
14. That we may be stimulated to exercises of piety. Why one angel in the singular number often spoken of.
15. The devil being described as the enemy of man, we should perpetually war against him.
16. The wickedness of the devil not by creation but by corruption. Vain and useless to inquire into the mode, time, and character of the fall of angels.
17. Though the devil is always opposed in will and endeavour to the will of God, he can do nothing without his permission and consent.
18. God so overrules wicked spirits as to permit them to try the faithful, and rule over the wicked.
19. The nature of bad angels. They are spiritual essences endued with sense and intelligence.
20. The latter part of the chapter briefly embracing the history of creation, and showing what it is of importance for us to know concerning God.
21. The special object of this knowledge is to prevent us, through ingratitude or thoughtlessness, from overlooking the perfections of God. Example of this primary knowledge.
22. Another object of this knowledge, viz., that perceiving how these things were created for our use, we may be excited to trust in God, pray to him, and love him.

1. **ALTHOUGH** Isaiah justly charges the worshippers of false gods with stupidity, in not learning from the foundations of the earth, and the circle of the heavens, who the true God is, (Isa. xl. 21;) yet so sluggish and grovelling is our intellect, that it was necessary he should be more clearly depicted, in order that the faithful might not fall away to Gentile fictions. The idea that God is the soul of the world, though the most tolerable that philosophers have suggested, is absurd; and, therefore, it was of importance to furnish us with a more intimate knowledge in order that we might not wander to and fro in uncertainty. Hence God was pleased that a history of the creation should exist—a history on which the faith of the Church might lean without seeking any other God than Him whom Moses sets forth as the Creator and Architect of the world. First, in that history, the period of time is marked so as to enable the faithful to ascend by an unbroken succession of years to the first origin of their



race and of all things. This knowledge is of the highest use not only as an antidote to the monstrous fables which anciently prevailed both in Egypt and the other regions of the world, but also as a means of giving a clearer manifestation of the eternity of God as contrasted with the birth of creation, and thereby inspiring us with higher admiration. We must not be moved by the profane jeer, that it is strange how it did not sooner occur to the Deity to create the heavens and the earth, instead of idly allowing an infinite period to pass away, during which thousands of generations might have existed, while the present world is drawing to a close before it has completed its six thousandth year. Why God delayed so long it is neither fit nor lawful to inquire. Should the human mind presume to do it, it could only fail in the attempt, nor would it be useful for us to know what God, as a trial of the modesty of our faith, has been pleased purposely to conceal. It was a shrewd saying of a good old man, who when some one pertly asked in derision what God did before the world was created, answered he made a hell for the inquisitive, (August. Confess., lib. xi. c. 12.) This reproof, not less weighty than severe, should repress the tickling wantonness which urges many to indulge in vicious and hurtful speculation.

In fine, let us remember that that invisible God, whose wisdom, power, and justice, are incomprehensible, is set before us in the history of Moses as in a mirror, in which his living image is reflected. For as an eye, either dimmed by age or weakened by any other cause, sees nothing distinctly without the aid of glasses, so (such is our imbecility) if Scripture does not direct us in our inquiries after God, we immediately turn vain in our imaginations. Those who now indulge their petulance, and refuse to take warning, will learn, when too late, how much better it had been reverently to regard the secret counsels of God, than to belch forth blasphemies which pollute the face of heaven. Justly does Augustine complain that God is insulted whenever any higher reason than his will is demanded. (Lib. de Gent.) He also in another place wisely reminds us that it is just as improper to raise questions about infinite periods of time as about



infinite space. (*De Civit. Dei.*) However wide the circuit of the heavens may be, it is of some definite extent. But should any one expostulate with God that vacant space remains exceeding creation by a hundred-fold, must not every pious mind detest the presumption? Similar is the madness of those who charge God with idleness in not having pleased them by creating the world countless ages sooner than he did create it. In their cupidity they affect to go beyond the world, as if the ample circumference of heaven and earth did not contain objects numerous and resplendent enough to absorb all our senses; as if, in the period of six thousand years, God had not furnished facts enough to exercise our minds in ceaseless meditation. Therefore, let us willingly remain hedged in by those boundaries within which God has been pleased to confine our persons, and, as it were, enclose our minds, so as to prevent them from losing themselves by wandering unrestrained.

2. With the same view Moses relates that the work of creation was accomplished not in one moment, but in six days. By this statement we are drawn away from fiction to the one God who thus divided his work into six days, that we may have no reluctance to devote our whole lives to the contemplation of it. For though our eyes, in what direction soever they turn, are forced to behold the works of God, we see how fleeting our attention is, and how quickly pious thoughts, if any arise, vanish away. Here, too, objection is taken to these progressive steps as inconsistent with the power of God, until human reason is subdued to the obedience of faith, and learns to welcome the calm quiescence to which the sanctification of the seventh day invites us. In the very order of events, we ought diligently to ponder on the paternal goodness of God toward the human race, in not creating Adam until he had liberally enriched the earth with all good things. Had he placed him on an earth barren and unfurnished; had he given life before light, he might have seemed to pay little regard to his interest. But now that he has arranged the motions of the sun and stars for man's use, has replenished the air, earth, and water, with living creatures, and produced all

kinds of fruit in abundance for the supply of food, by performing the office of a provident and industrious head of a family, he has shown his wondrous goodness toward us. These subjects, which I only briefly touch, if more attentively pondered, will make it manifest that Moses was a sure witness and herald of the one only Creator. I do not repeat what I have already explained, viz., that mention is here made not of the bare essence of God, but that his eternal Wisdom and Spirit are also set before us, in order that we may not dream of any other God than Him who desires to be recognised in that express image.

3. But before I begin to treat more fully of the nature of man, (chap. xv. and B. II. c. 1,) it will be proper to say something of angels. For although Moses, in accommodation to the ignorance of the generality of men, does not in the history of the creation make mention of any other works of God than those which meet our eye, yet, seeing he afterwards introduces angels as the ministers of God, we easily infer that he for whom they do service is their Creator. Hence, though Moses, speaking in popular language, did not at the very commencement enumerate the angels among the creatures of God, nothing prevents us from treating distinctly and explicitly of what is delivered by Scripture concerning them in other places. For if we desire to know God by his works, we surely cannot overlook this noble and illustrious specimen. We may add that this branch of doctrine is very necessary for the refutation of numerous errors. The minds of many are so struck with the excellence of angelic natures, that they would think them insulted in being subjected to the authority of God, and so made subordinate. Hence a fancied divinity has been assigned them. Manes, too, has arisen with his sect, fabricating to himself two principles—God and the devil, attributing the origin of good things to God, but assigning all bad natures to the devil as their author. Were this delirium to take possession of our minds, God would be denied his glory in the creation of the world. For, seeing there is nothing more peculiar to God than eternity and *αὐτὸνσία*, i. e. self-existence, or existence of himself, if I may so speak, do not those who attribute

it to the devil in some degree invest him with the honour of divinity? And where is the omnipotence of God, if the devil has the power of executing whatever he pleases against the will, and notwithstanding of the opposition of God? But the only good ground which the Manichees have, viz., that it were impious to ascribe the creation of any thing bad to a good God, militates in no degree against the orthodox faith, since it is not admitted that there is any thing naturally bad throughout the universe; the depravity and wickedness, whether of man or of the devil, and the sins thence resulting, being not from nature, but from the corruption of nature; nor, at first, did anything whatever exist that did not exhibit some manifestation of the divine wisdom and justice. To obviate such perverse imaginations, we must raise our minds higher than our eyes can penetrate. It was probably with this view that the Nicene Creed, in calling God the creator of all things, makes express mention of things invisible. My care, however, must be to keep within the bounds which piety prescribes, lest by indulging in speculations beyond my reach, I bewilder the reader, and lead him away from the simplicity of the faith. And since the Holy Spirit always instructs us in what is useful, but altogether omits, or only touches cursorily on matters which tend little to edification, of all such matters, it certainly is our duty to remain in willing ignorance.

4. Angels being the ministers appointed to execute the commands of God, must, of course, be admitted to be his creatures, but to stir up questions concerning the time or order in which they were created, (see Lombard, lib. ii. dist. 2, sqq.,) bespeaks more perverseness than industry. Moses relates that the heavens and the earth were finished, with all their host; what avails it anxiously to inquire at what time other more hidden celestial hosts than the stars and planets also began to be? Not to dwell on this, let us here remember that on the whole subject of religion one rule of modesty and soberness is to be observed, and it is this,—in obscure matters not to speak or think, or even long to know, more than the Word of God has delivered. A second rule is, that in reading the Scriptures we should constantly



direct our inquiries and meditations to those things which tend to edification, not indulge in curiosity, or in studying things of no use. And since the Lord has been pleased to instruct us, not in frivolous questions, but in solid piety, in the fear of his name, in true faith, and the duties of holiness, let us rest satisfied with such knowledge. Wherefore, if we would be duly wise, we must renounce those vain babblings of idle men, concerning the nature, ranks, and number of angels, without any authority from the Word of God. I know that many fasten on these topics more eagerly, and take greater pleasure in them than in those relating to daily practice. But if we decline not to be the disciples of Christ, let us not decline to follow the method which he has prescribed. In this way, being contented with him for our master, we will not only refrain from, but even feel averse to, superfluous speculations which he discourages. None can deny that Dionysius (whoever he may have been) has many shrewd and subtle disquisitions in his *Celestial Hierarchy*, but on looking at them more closely, every one must see that they are merely idle talk. The duty of a Theologian, however, is not to tickle the ear, but confirm the conscience, by teaching what is true, certain, and useful. When you read the work of Dionysius, you would think that the man had come down from heaven, and was relating, not what he had learned, but what he had actually seen. Paul, however, though he was carried to the third heaven, so far from delivering any thing of the kind, positively declares, that it was not lawful for man to speak the secrets which he had seen. Bidding adieu, therefore, to that nugatory wisdom, let us endeavour to ascertain from the simple doctrine of Scripture what it is the Lord's pleasure that we should know concerning angels.

5. In Scripture, then, we uniformly read that angels are heavenly spirits, whose obedience and ministry God employs to execute all the purposes which he has decreed, and hence their name as being a kind of intermediate messengers to manifest his will to men. The names by which several of them are distinguished have reference to the same office. They are called hosts, because they surround their Prince as



his court,—adorn and display his majesty,—like soldiers, have their eyes always turned to their leader's standard, and are so ready and prompt to execute his orders, that the moment he gives the nod, they prepare for, or rather are actually at work. In declaring the magnificence of the divine throne, similar representations are given by the prophets, and especially by Daniel, when he says, that when God stood up to judgment, "thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him," (Dan. vii. 10.) As by these means the Lord wonderfully exerts and declares the power and might of his hand, they are called Virtues. Again, as his government of the world is exercised and administered by them, they are called at one time Principalities, at another Powers, at another Dominions, (Col. i. 16; Eph. i. 21.) Lastly, as the glory of God in some measure dwells in them, they are also termed Thrones; though as to this last designation I am unwilling to speak positively, as a different interpretation is equally, if not more congruous. To say nothing, therefore, of the name of Thrones, the former names are often employed by the Holy Spirit in commendation of the dignity of angelic service. Nor is it right to pass by unhonoured those instruments by whom God specially manifests the presence of his power. Nay, they are more than once called Gods, because the Deity is in some measure represented to us in their service, as in a mirror. I am rather inclined, however, to agree with ancient writers, that in those passages<sup>1</sup> wherein it is stated that the angel of the Lord appeared to Abraham, Jacob, and Moses, Christ was that angel. Still it is true, that when mention is made of all the angels, they are frequently so designated. Nor ought this to seem strange. For if princes and rulers have this honour given them, because in their office they are vicegerents of God, the supreme King and Judge, with far greater reason may it be given to angels, in whom the brightness of the divine glory is much more conspicuously displayed.

6. But the point on which the Scriptures specially insist is that which tends most to our comfort, and to the confir-

<sup>1</sup> Gen. xviii. 2; xxxii. 1, 28; Josh. v. 14; Judges vi. 14; xiii. 10, 22.

mation of our faith, namely, that angels are the ministers and dispensers of the divine bounty towards us. Accordingly, we are told how they watch for our safety, how they undertake our defence, direct our path, and take heed that no evil befall us. There are whole passages which relate, in the first instance, to Christ, the Head of the Church, and after him to all believers. "He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone." Again, "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them."<sup>1</sup> By these passages the Lord shows that the protection of those whom he has undertaken to defend he has delegated to his angels. Accordingly, an angel of the Lord consoles Hagar in her flight, and bids her be reconciled to her mistress. Abraham promises to his servant that an angel will be the guide of his journey. Jacob, in blessing Ephraim and Manasseh, prays "The angel which redeemed me from all evil bless the lads." So an angel was appointed to guard the camp of the Israelites; and as often as God was pleased to deliver Israel from the hands of his enemies, he stirred up avengers by the ministry of angels. Thus, in fine, (not to mention more,) angels ministered to Christ, and were present with him in all straits. To the women they announced his resurrection; to the disciples they foretold his glorious advent. In discharging the office of our protectors, they war against the devil and all our enemies, and execute vengeance upon those who afflict us. Thus we read that an angel of the Lord, to deliver Jerusalem from siege, slew one hundred and eighty-five thousand men in the camp of the king of Assyria in a single night.

7. Whether or not each believer has a single angel assigned to him for his defence, I dare not positively affirm. When Daniel introduces the angel of the Persians and the angel of the Greeks, he undoubtedly intimates that certain

<sup>1</sup> Ps. xci. 11; xxxiv. 8; Gen. xvi. 9; xxiv. 7; xlviii. 16; Ex. xiv. 19, 23, 20; Judges ii. 1, 20; vi. 11; xiii. 10; Matth. iv. 11; Luke xxii. 43; Matth. xxviii. 5; Luke xxiv. 5; Acts i. 10; 2 Kings xix. 35; Isa. xxxvii. 36.

angels are appointed as a kind of presidents over kingdoms and provinces.<sup>1</sup> Again, when Christ says that the angels of children always behold the face of his Father, he insinuates that there are certain angels to whom their safety has been entrusted. But I know not if it can be inferred from this, that each believer has his own angel. This, indeed, I hold for certain, that each of us is cared for, not by one angel merely, but that all with one consent watch for our safety. For it is said of all the angels collectively, that they rejoice "over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons which need no repentance." It is also said, that the angels (meaning more than one) carried the soul of Lazarus into Abraham's bosom. Nor was it to no purpose that Elisha showed his servant the many chariots of fire which were specially allotted him.

There is one passage which seems to intimate somewhat more clearly that each individual has a separate angel. When Peter, after his deliverance from prison, knocked at the door of the house where the brethren were assembled, being unable to think it could be himself, they said that it was his angel. This idea seems to have been suggested to them by a common belief that every believer has a single angel assigned to him. Here, however, it may be alleged, that there is nothing to prevent us from understanding it of any one of the angels to whom the Lord might have given the charge of Peter at that particular time, without implying that he was to be his perpetual guardian, according to the vulgar imagination, (see Calvin on Mark v. 9,) that two angels, a good and a bad, as a kind of genii, are assigned to each individual. After all, it is not worth while anxiously to investigate a point which does not greatly concern us. If any one does not think it enough to know that all the orders of the heavenly host are perpetually watching for his safety, I do not see what he could gain by knowing that he has one angel as a special guardian. Those, again, who limit the care which

<sup>1</sup> Dan. x. 13, 20; xii. 1; Matth. xviii. 20; Luke xv. 7; xvi. 22; 2 Kings xvi. 17; Acts xii. 15.



God takes of each of us to a single angel, do great injury to themselves and to all the members of the Church, as if there were no value in those promises of auxiliary troops, who on every side encircling and defending us, embolden us to fight more manfully.

8. Those who presume to dogmatize on the ranks and numbers of angels, would do well to consider on what foundation they rest. As to their rank, I admit that Michael is described by David as a mighty Prince, and by Jude as an Archangel.<sup>1</sup> Paul also tells us, that an archangel will blow the trumpet which is to summon the world to judgment. But how is it possible from such passages to ascertain the gradations of honour among the angels, to determine the insignia, and assign the place and station of each? Even the two names, Michael and Gabriel, mentioned in Scripture, or a third, if you choose to add it from the history of Tobit, seem to intimate by their meaning that they are given to angels in accommodation to the weakness of our capacity, though I rather choose not to speak positively on the point. As to the number of angels, we learn from the mouth of our Saviour that there are many legions, and from Daniel that there are many myriads. Elisha's servant saw a multitude of chariots, and their vast number is declared by the fact, that they encamp round about those that fear the Lord. It is certain that spirits have no bodily shape, and yet Scripture, in accommodation to us, describes them under the form of winged Cherubim and Seraphim; not without cause, to assure us that when occasion requires, they will hasten to our aid with incredible swiftness, winging their way to us with the speed of lightning. Farther than this, in regard both to the ranks and numbers of angels, let us class them among those mysterious subjects, the full revelation of which is deferred to the last day, and accordingly refrain from inquiring too curiously, or talking presumptuously.

<sup>1</sup> Dan. xii. 1; Jude 9; 1 Thess. iv. 16; Dan. x. 13, 21; Luke i. 19, 26; Tobit iii. 17; v. 5; Matth. xxvi. 53; Dan. vii. 10; 2 Kings vi. 17; Ps. xxxiv. 7.



9. There is one point, however, which, though called into doubt by certain restless individuals, we ought to hold for certain, viz., that angels are ministering spirits, (Heb. i. 14;) whose service God employs for the protection of his people, and by whose means he distributes his favours among men, and also executes other works. The Sadducees of old maintained, that by angels nothing more was meant than the movements which God impresses on men, or manifestations which he gives of his own power, (Acts xxiii. 8.) But this dream is contradicted by so many passages of Scripture, that it seems strange how such gross ignorance could have had any countenance among the Jews. To say nothing of the passages I have already quoted, passages which refer to thousands and legions of angels, speak of them as rejoicing, as bearing up the faithful in their hands, carrying their souls to rest, beholding the face of their Father, and so forth:<sup>1</sup> there are other passages which most clearly prove that they are real beings possessed of spiritual essence. Stephen and Paul say that the Law was enacted in the hands of angels. Our Saviour, moreover, says, that at the resurrection the elect will be like angels; that the day of judgment is known not even to the angels; that at that time he himself will come with the holy angels. However much such passages may be twisted, their meaning is plain. In like manner, when Paul beseeches Timothy to keep his precepts as before Christ and his elect angels, it is not qualities or inspirations without substance that he speaks of, but true spirits. And when it is said, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, that Christ was made more excellent than the angels, that the world was not made subject to them, that Christ assumed not their nature, but that of man, it is impossible to give a meaning to the passages without understanding that angels are blessed spirits, as to whom such comparisons may competently be made. The author of that Epistle declares the same thing when he places the souls of believers and the holy angels together in the kingdom of heaven. Moreover, in the passages

<sup>1</sup> Luke xv. 10; Ps. xci. 11; Matth. iv. 6; Luke iv. 10, 16, 22; Matth. xviii. 10; Acts vii. 55; Gal. iii. 19; Matth. xxii. 30; xxiv. 36; Eph. iii. 10; 1 Peter i. 12; Heb. i. 6; Ps. xcvii. 7.

we have already quoted, the angels of children are said to behold the face of God, to defend us by their protection, to rejoice in our salvation, to admire the manifold grace of God in the Church, to be under Christ their head. To the same effect is their frequent appearance to the holy patriarchs in human form, their speaking, and consenting to be hospitably entertained. Christ, too, in consequence of the supremacy which he obtains as Mediator, is called the Angel, (Mal. iii. 1.) It was thought proper to touch on this subject in passing, with the view of putting the simple upon their guard against the foolish and absurd imaginations which, suggested by Satan many centuries ago, are ever and anon starting up anew.

10. It remains to give warning against the superstition which usually begins to creep in, when it is said that all blessings are ministered and dispensed to us by angels. For the human mind is apt immediately to think that there is no honour which they ought not to receive, and hence the peculiar offices of Christ and God are bestowed upon them. In this way, the glory of Christ was for several former ages greatly obscured, extravagant eulogiums being pronounced on angels without any authority from Scripture. Among the corruptions which we now oppose, there is scarcely any one of greater antiquity. Even Paul appears to have had a severe contest with some who so exalted angels as to make them almost the superiors of Christ. Hence he so anxiously urges in his Epistle to the Colossians, (Col. i. 16, 20,) that Christ is not only superior to all angels, but that all the endowments which they possess are derived from him; thus warning us against forsaking him, by turning to those who are not sufficient for themselves, but must draw with us at a common fountain. As the refulgence of the Divine glory is manifested in them, there is nothing to which we are more prone than to prostrate ourselves before them in stupid adoration, and then ascribe to them the blessings which we owe to God alone. Even John confesses in the Apocalypse, (Rev. xix. 10; xxii. 8, 9,) that this was his own case, but he immediately adds the answer which was given to him, "See thou do it not; I am thy fellow servant: worship God."

11. This danger we will happily avoid, if we consider why it is that God, instead of acting directly without their agency, is wont to employ it in manifesting his power, providing for the safety of his people, and imparting the gifts of his beneficence. This he certainly does not from necessity, as if he were unable to dispense with them. Whenever he pleases, he passes them by, and performs his own work by a single nod: so far are they from relieving him of any difficulty. Therefore, when he employs them it is as a help to our weakness, that nothing may be wanting to elevate our hopes or strengthen our confidence. It ought, indeed, to be sufficient for us that the Lord declares himself to be our protector. But when we see ourselves beset by so many perils, so many injuries, so many kinds of enemies, such is our frailty and effeminacy, that we might at times be filled with alarm, or driven to despair, did not the Lord proclaim his gracious presence by some means in accordance with our feeble capacities. For this reason, he not only promises to take care of us, but assures us that he has numberless attendants, to whom he has committed the charge of our safety, —that whatever dangers may impend, so long as we are encircled by their protection and guardianship, we are placed beyond all hazard of evil. I admit that after we have a simple assurance of the divine protection, it is improper in us still to look round for help. But since for this our weakness the Lord is pleased, in his infinite goodness and indulgence, to provide, it would ill become us to overlook the favour. Of this we have an example in the servant of Elisha, (2 Kings vi. 17,) who, seeing the mountain encompassed by the army of the Assyrians, and no means of escape, was completely overcome with terror, and thought it all over with himself and his master. Then Elisha prayed to God to open the eyes of the servant, who forthwith beheld the mountain filled with horses and chariots of fire; in other words, with a multitude of angels, to whom he and the prophet had been given in charge. Confirmed by the vision he received courage, and could boldly defy the enemy, whose appearance previously filled him with dismay.



12. Whatever, therefore, is said as to the ministry of angels, let us employ for the purpose of removing all distrust, and strengthening our confidence in God. Since the Lord has provided us with such protection, let us not be terrified at the multitude of our enemies, as if they could prevail notwithstanding of his aid, but let us adopt the sentiment of Elisha, that more are for us than against us. How preposterous, therefore, is it to allow ourselves to be led away from God by angels who have been appointed for the very purpose of assuring us of his more immediate presence to help us? But we are so led away, if angels do not conduct us directly to him—making us look to him, invoke and celebrate him as our only defender—if they are not regarded merely as hands moving to our assistance just as he directs—if they do not direct us to Christ as the only Mediator on whom we must wholly depend and recline, looking towards him, and resting in him. Our minds ought to give thorough heed to what Jacob saw in his vision, (Gen. xxviii. 12,)—angels descending to the earth to men, and again mounting up from men to heaven, by means of a ladder, at the head of which the Lord of Hosts was seated, intimating that it is solely by the intercession of Christ that the ministry of angels extends to us, as he himself declares, “Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man,” (John i. 51.) Accordingly, the servant of Abraham, though he had been commended to the guardianship of an angel, (Gen. xxiv. 7,) does not therefore invoke that angel to be present with him, but trusting to the commendation, pours out his prayers before the Lord, and entreats him to show mercy to Abraham. As God does not make angels the ministers of his power and goodness, that he may share his glory with them, so he does not promise his assistance by their instrumentality, that we may divide our confidence between him and them. Away, then, with that Platonic philosophy of seeking access to God by means of angels, and courting them with the view of making God more propitious, (*Plat. in Epinomide et Cratylo*,) —a philosophy which presumptuous and superstitious men



attempted at first to introduce into our religion, and which they persist in even to this day.

13. The tendency of all that Scripture teaches concerning devils is to put us on our guard against their wiles and machinations, that we may provide ourselves with weapons strong enough to drive away the most formidable foes. For when Satan is called the god and ruler of this world, the strong man armed, the prince of the power of the air, the roaring lion,<sup>1</sup> the object of all these descriptions is to make us more cautious and vigilant, and more prepared for the contest. This is sometimes stated in distinct terms. For Peter, after describing the devil as a roaring lion going about seeking whom he may devour, immediately adds the exhortation, "whom resist stedfast in the faith," (1 Pet. v. 8.) And Paul, after reminding us that we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places, immediately enjoins us to put on armour equal to so great and perilous a contest, (Ephes. vi. 12.) Wherefore, let this be the use to which we turn all these statements. Being forewarned of the constant presence of an enemy the most daring, the most powerful, the most crafty, the most indefatigable, the most completely equipped with all the engines and the most expert in the science of war, let us not allow ourselves to be overtaken by sloth or cowardice, but, on the contrary, with minds aroused and ever on the alert, let us stand ready to resist; and, knowing that this warfare is terminated only by death, let us study to persevere. Above all, fully conscious of our weakness and want of skill, let us invoke the help of God, and attempt nothing without trusting in him, since it is his alone to supply counsel, and strength, and courage, and arms.

14. That we may feel the more strongly urged to do so, the Scripture declares that the enemies who war against us are not one or two, or few in number, but a great host. Mary Magdalene is said to have been delivered from seven devils by which she was possessed; and our Saviour assures

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. iv. 4; John xii. 31; Matth. xii. 29; Ephes. ii. 2,

us that it is an ordinary circumstance, when a devil has been expelled, if access is again given to it, to take seven other spirits, more wicked than itself, and resume the vacant possession. Nay, one man is said to have been possessed by a whole legion.<sup>1</sup> By this, then, we are taught that the number of enemies with whom we have to war is almost infinite, that we may not, from a contemptuous idea of the fewness of their numbers, be more remiss in the contest, or from imagining that an occasional truce is given us, indulge in sloth. In one Satan or devil being often mentioned in the singular number, the thing denoted is that domination of iniquity which is opposed to the reign of righteousness. For, as the Church and the communion of saints has Christ for its head, so the faction of the wicked, and wickedness itself, is pourtrayed with its prince exercising supremacy. Hence the expression, "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels," (Matth. xxv. 41.)

15. One thing which ought to animate us to perpetual contest with the devil is, that he is everywhere called both our adversary and the adversary of God. For, if the glory of God is dear to us, as it ought to be, we ought to struggle with all our might against him who aims at the extinction of that glory. If we are animated with proper zeal to maintain the Kingdom of Christ, we must wage irreconcilable war with him who conspires its ruin. Again, if we have any anxiety about our own salvation, we ought to make no peace nor truce with him who is continually laying schemes for its destruction. But such is the character given to Satan in the third chapter of Genesis, where he is seen seducing man from his allegiance to God, that he may both deprive God of his due honour, and plunge man headlong in destruction. Such, too, is the description given of him in the Gospels, (Matth. xiii. 28,) where he is called the enemy, and is said to sow tares in order to corrupt the seed of eternal life. In one word, in all his actions we experience the truth of our Saviour's description, that he was "a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth," (John viii. 44.) Truth he assails with lies, light he obscures with darkness. The minds of

<sup>1</sup> Mark xvi. 9; Matth. xii. 43; Luke viii. 30.

men he involves in error ; he stirs up hatred, inflames strife and war, and all in order that he may overthrow the kingdom of God, and drown men in eternal perdition with himself. Hence it is evident that his whole nature is depraved, mischievous, and malignant. There must be extreme depravity in a mind bent on assailing the glory of God and the salvation of man. This is intimated by John in his Epistle, when he says that he “sinneth from the beginning,” (1 John iii. 8,) implying that he is the author, leader, and contriver of all malice and wickedness.

16. But as the devil was created by God, we must remember that this malice which we attribute to his nature is not from creation, but from depravation. Every thing damnable in him he brought upon himself, by his revolt and fall. Of this Scripture reminds us, lest, by believing that he was so created at first, we should ascribe to God what is most foreign to his nature. For this reason, Christ declares, (John viii. 44,) that Satan, when he lies, “speaketh of his own,” and states the reason, “because he abode not in the truth.” By saying that he abode not in the truth, he certainly intimates that he once was in the truth, and by calling him the father of lies, he puts it out of his power to charge God with the depravity of which he was himself the cause. But although the expressions are brief and not very explicit, they are amply sufficient to vindicate the majesty of God from every calumny. And what more does it concern us to know of devils? Some murmur because the Scripture does not in various passages give a distinct and regular exposition of Satan’s fall, its cause, mode, date, and nature. But as these things are of no consequence to us, it was better, if not entirely to pass them in silence, at least only to touch lightly upon them. The Holy Spirit could not deign to feed curiosity with idle, unprofitable histories. We see it was the Lord’s purpose to deliver nothing in his sacred oracles which we might not learn for edification. Therefore, instead of dwelling on superfluous matters, let it be sufficient for us briefly to hold, with regard to the nature of devils, that at their first creation they were the angels of God, but by revolting they both ruined themselves, and became the



instruments of perdition to others. As it was useful to know this much, it is clearly taught by Peter and Jude ; " God," they say, " spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness to be reserved unto judgment," (2 Pet. ii. 4; Jude ver. 6.) And Paul, by speaking of the elect angels, obviously draws a tacit contrast between them and reprobate angels.

17. With regard to the strife and war which Satan is said to wage with God, it must be understood with this qualification, that Satan cannot possibly do anything against the will and consent of God. For we read in the history of Job, that Satan appears in the presence of God to receive his commands, and dares not proceed to execute any enterprise until he is authorized. In the same way, when Ahab was to be deceived, he undertook to be a lying spirit in the mouth of all the prophets; and on being commissioned by the Lord, proceeds to do so. For this reason, also, the spirit which tormented Saul is said to be an evil spirit from the Lord, because he was, as it were, the scourge by which the misdeeds of the wicked king were punished. In another place it is said that the plagues of Egypt were inflicted by God through the instrumentality of wicked angels. In conformity with these particular examples, Paul declares generally that unbelievers are blinded by God, though he had previously described it as the doing of Satan.<sup>1</sup> It is evident, therefore, that Satan is under the power of God, and is so ruled by his authority, that he must yield obedience to it. Moreover, though we say that Satan resists God, and does works at variance with His works, we at the same time maintain that this contrariety and opposition depend on the permission of God. I now speak not of Satan's will and endeavour, but only of the result. For the disposition of the devil being wicked, he has no inclination whatever to obey the divine will, but, on the contrary, is wholly bent on contumacy and rebellion. This much, therefore, he has of himself, and his own iniquity, that he eagerly,

<sup>1</sup> Job i. 6; ii. 1; 1 Kings xxii. 20; 1 Sam. xvi. 14; xviii. 10; 2 Thess. ii. 9, 11.



and of set purpose, opposes God, aiming at those things which he deems most contrary to the will of God. But as God holds him bound and fettered by the curb of his power, he executes those things only for which permission has been given him, and thus, however unwilling, obeys his Creator, being forced, whenever he is required, to do Him service.

18. God thus turning the unclean spirits hither and thither at his pleasure, employs them in exercising believers by warring against them, assailing them with wiles, urging them with solicitations, pressing close upon them, disturbing, alarming, and occasionally wounding, but never conquering or oppressing them; whereas they hold the wicked in thralldom, exercise dominion over their minds and bodies, and employ them as bond-slaves in all kinds of iniquity. Because believers are disturbed by such enemies, they are addressed in such exhortations as these: "Neither give place to the devil;" "Your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour; whom resist stedfast in the faith," (Eph. iv. 27; 1 Pet. v. 8.) Paul acknowledges that he was not exempt from this species of contest when he says, that for the purpose of subduing his pride, a messenger of Satan was sent to buffet him, (2 Cor. xii. 7.) This trial, therefore, is common to all the children of God. But as the promise of bruising Satan's head (Gen. iii. 15) applies alike to Christ and to all his members, I deny that believers can ever be oppressed or vanquished by him. They are often, indeed, thrown into alarm, but never so thoroughly as not to recover themselves. They fall by the violence of the blows, but they get up again; they are wounded, but not mortally. In fine, they labour on through the whole course of their lives, so as ultimately to gain the victory, though they meet with occasional defeats. We know how David, through the just anger of God, was left for a time to Satan, and by his instigation numbered the people, (2 Sam. xxiv. 1;) nor without cause does Paul hold out a hope of pardon in case any should have become ensnared by the wiles of the devil, (2 Tim. ii. 26.) Accordingly, he elsewhere shows that the promise above quoted commences in this life where

the struggle is carried on, and that it is completed after the struggle is ended. His words are, "The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly," (Rom. xvi. 20.) In our Head, indeed, this victory was always perfect, because the prince of the world "had nothing" in him, (John xiv. 30;) but in us, who are his members, it is now partially obtained, and will be perfected when we shall have put off our mortal flesh, through which we are liable to infirmity, and shall have been filled with the energy of the Holy Spirit. In this way, when the kingdom of Christ is raised up and established, that of Satan falls, as our Lord himself expresses it, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven," (Luke x. 18.) By these words, he confirmed the report which the apostles gave of the efficacy of their preaching. In like manner he says, "When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace. But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils," (Luke xi. 21, 22.) And to this end, Christ, by dying, overcame Satan, who had the power of death, (Heb. ii. 14,) and triumphed over all his hosts, that they might not injure the Church, which otherwise would suffer from them every moment. For, (such being our weakness, and such his raging fury,) how could we withstand his manifold and unintermitted assaults for any period, however short, if we did not trust to the victory of our leader? God, therefore, does not allow Satan to have dominion over the souls of believers, but only gives over to his sway the impious and unbelieving, whom he deigns not to number among his flock. For the devil is said to have undisputed possession of this world until he is dispossessed by Christ. In like manner, he is said to blind all who do not believe the Gospel, and to do his own work in the children of disobedience. And justly; for all the wicked are vessels of wrath, and, accordingly, to whom should they be subjected but to the minister of the divine vengeance? In fine, they are said to be of their father the devil.<sup>1</sup> For as believers

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. iv. 4; Eph. ii. 2; Rom. ix. 22; John viii. 44; 1 John iii. 8.

are recognised to be the sons of God by bearing his image, so the wicked are properly regarded as the children of Satan, from having degenerated into his image.

19. Having above refuted that nugatory philosophy concerning the holy angels, which teaches that they are nothing but good motions or inspirations which God excites in the minds of men, we must here likewise refute those who foolishly allege that devils are nothing but bad affections or perturbations suggested by our carnal nature. The brief refutation is to be found in passages of Scripture on this subject, passages neither few nor obscure. First, when they are called unclean spirits and apostate angels, (Matth. xii. 43; Jude, verse 6,) who have degenerated from their original, the very terms sufficiently declare that they are not motions or affections of the mind, but truly, as they are called, minds or spirits endued with sense and intellect. In like manner, when the children of God are contrasted by John, and also by our Saviour, with the children of the devil, would not the contrast be absurd if the term devil meant nothing more than evil inspirations? And John adds still more emphatically, that the devil sinneth from the beginning, (1 John iii. 8.) In like manner, when Jude introduces the archangel Michael contending with the devil, (Jude, verse 9,) he certainly contrasts a wicked and rebellious with a good angel. To this corresponds the account given in the Book of Job, that Satan appeared in the presence of God with the holy angels. But the clearest passages of all are those which make mention of the punishment which, from the judgment of God, they already begin to feel, and are to feel more especially at the resurrection, "What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time?" (Matth. viii. 29;) and again, "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels," (Matth. xxv. 41.) Again, "If God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness to be reserved unto judgment," &c., (2 Pet. ii. 4.) How absurd the expressions, that devils are doomed to eternal punishment, that fire is prepared for them,



that they are even now excruciated and tormented by the glory of Christ, if there were truly no devils at all? But as all discussion on this subject is superfluous for those who give credit to the Word of God, while little is gained by quoting Scripture to those empty speculators whom nothing but novelty can please, I believe I have already done enough for my purpose, which was to put the pious on their guard against the delirious dreams with which restless men harass themselves and the simple. The subject, however, deserved to be touched upon, lest any, by embracing that error, should imagine they have no enemy, and thereby be more remiss or less cautious in resisting.

20. Meanwhile, being placed in this most beautiful theatre, let us not decline to take a pious delight in the clear and manifest works of God. For, as we have elsewhere observed, though not the chief, it is, in point of order, the first evidence of faith, to remember to which side soever we turn, that all which meets the eye is the work of God, and at the same time to meditate with pious care on the end which God had in view in creating it. Wherefore, in order that we may apprehend with true faith what it is necessary to know concerning God, it is of importance to attend to the history of the creation, as briefly recorded by Moses, and afterwards more copiously illustrated by pious writers, more especially by Basil and Ambrose. From this history we learn that God, by the power of his Word and his Spirit, created the heavens and the earth out of nothing; that thereafter he produced things inanimate and animate of every kind, arranging an innumerable variety of objects in admirable order, giving each kind its proper nature, office, place, and station; at the same time, as all things were liable to corruption, providing for the perpetuation of each single species, cherishing some by secret methods, and, as it were, from time to time instilling new vigour into them, and bestowing on others a power of continuing their race, so preventing it from perishing at their own death. Heaven and earth being thus most richly adorned, and copiously supplied with all things, like a large and splendid mansion gorgeously constructed and exquisitely



furnished, at length man was made—man, by the beauty of his person and his many noble endowments, the most glorious specimen of the works of God. But, as I have no intention to give the history of creation in detail, it is sufficient to have again thus briefly touched on it in passing. I have already reminded my reader, that the best course for him is to derive his knowledge of the subject from Moses and others who have carefully and faithfully transmitted an account of the creation.

21. It is unnecessary to dwell at length on the end that should be aimed at in considering the works of God. The subject has been in a great measure explained elsewhere, and in so far as required by our present work, may now be disposed of in a few words. Undoubtedly, were one to attempt to speak in due terms of the inestimable wisdom, power, justice, and goodness of God, in the formation of the world, no grace or splendour of diction could equal the greatness of the subject. Still there can be no doubt that the Lord would have us constantly occupied with such holy meditation, in order that, while we contemplate the immense treasures of wisdom and goodness exhibited in the creatures as in so many mirrors, we may not only run our eye over them with a hasty, and, as it were, evanescent glance, but dwell long upon them, seriously and faithfully turn them in our minds, and every now and then bring them to recollection. But as the present work is of a didactic nature, we cannot fittingly enter on topics which require lengthened discourse. Therefore, in order to be compendious, let the reader understand that he has a genuine apprehension of the character of God as the Creator of the world; first, if he attends to the general rule, never thoughtlessly or obliviously to overlook the glorious perfections which God displays in his creatures; and, secondly, if he makes a self application of what he sees, so as to fix it deeply on his heart. The former is exemplified when we consider how great the Architect must be who framed and ordered the multitude of the starry host so admirably, that it is impossible to imagine a more glorious sight, so stationing some, and fixing them to particular spots that they cannot move; giving a freer course to others, yet

setting limits to their wanderings; so tempering the movement of the whole as to measure out day and night, months, years, and seasons, and at the same time so regulating the inequality of days as to prevent every thing like confusion. The former course is, moreover, exemplified when we attend to his power in sustaining the vast mass, and guiding the swift revolutions of the heavenly bodies, &c. These few examples sufficiently explain what is meant by recognising the divine perfections in the creation of the world. Were we to attempt to go over the whole subject we should never come to a conclusion, there being as many miracles of divine power, as many striking evidences of wisdom and goodness, as there are classes of objects, nay, as there are individual objects, great or small, throughout the universe.

22. The other course which has a closer relation to faith remains to be considered, viz., that while we observe how God has destined all things for our good and salvation, we at the same time feel his power and grace, both in ourselves and in the great blessings which he has bestowed upon us; thence stirring up ourselves to confidence in him, to invocation, praise, and love. Moreover, as I lately observed, the Lord himself, by the very order of creation, has demonstrated that he created all things for the sake of man. Nor is it unimportant to observe, that he divided the formation of the world into six days, though it had been in no respect more difficult to complete the whole work, in all its parts, in one moment than by a gradual progression. But he was pleased to display his providence and paternal care towards us in this, that before he formed man, he provided whatever he foresaw would be useful and salutary to him. How ungrateful, then, were it to doubt whether we are cared for by this most excellent Parent, who we see cared for us even before we were born! How impious were it to tremble in distrust, lest we should one day be abandoned in our necessity by that kindness which, antecedent to our existence, displayed itself in a complete supply of all good things! Moreover, Moses tells us that everything which the world contains is liberally placed at our disposal. This God cer-

tainly did not that he might delude us with an empty form of donation. Nothing, therefore, which concerns our safety will ever be wanting. To conclude, in one word; as often as we call God the Creator of heaven and earth, let us remember that the distribution of all the things which he created are in his hand and power, but that we are his sons, whom he has undertaken to nourish and bring up in allegiance to him, that we may expect the substance of all good from him alone, and have full hope that he will never suffer us to be in want of things necessary to salvation, so as to leave us dependent on some other source; that in everything we desire we may address our prayers to him, and, in every benefit we receive, acknowledge his hand, and give him thanks; that thus allured by his great goodness and beneficence, we may study with our whole heart to love and serve him.

## CHAPTER XV.

## STATE IN WHICH MAN WAS CREATED. THE FACULTIES OF THE SOUL—THE IMAGE OF GOD—FREE WILL—ORIGINAL RIGHTEOUSNESS.

This chapter is thus divided :—I. The necessary rules to be observed in considering the state of man before the fall being laid down, the point first considered is the creation of the body, and the lesson taught by its being formed out of the earth, and made alive, sec. 1. II. The immortality of the human soul is proved by various solid arguments, sec. 2. III. The image of God (the strongest proof of the soul's immortality) is considered, and various absurd fancies are refuted, sec. 3. IV. Several errors which obscure the light of truth being dissipated, follows a philosophical and theological consideration of the faculties of the soul before the fall.

*Sections.*

1. A twofold knowledge of God, viz., before the fall and after it. The former here considered. Particular rules or precautions to be observed in this discussion. What we are taught by a body formed out of the dust, and tenanted by a spirit.
2. The immortality of the soul proved from, 1. The testimony of conscience. 2. The knowledge of God. 3. The noble faculties with which it is endued. 4. Its activity and wondrous fancies in sleep. 5. Innumerable passages of Scripture.
3. The image of God one of the strongest proofs of the immortality of the soul. What meant by this image. The dreams of Osiander concerning the image of God refuted. Whether any difference between "image" and "likeness." Another objection of Osiander refuted. The image of God conspicuous in the whole Adam.
4. The image of God is in the soul. Its nature may be learnt from its renewal by Christ. What comprehended under this renewal. What the image of God in man before the fall. In what things it now appears. When and where it will be seen in perfection.
5. The dreams of the Manichees and of Servetus, as to the origin of the soul, refuted. Also of Osiander, who denies that there is any image of God in man without essential righteousness.
6. The doctrine of philosophers as to the faculties of the soul generally discordant, doubtful, and obscure. The excellence of the soul described. Only one soul in each man. A brief review of the opinion of philosophers as to the faculties of the soul. What to be thought of this opinion.
7. The division of the faculties of the soul into intellect and will, more agreeable to Christian doctrine.



8. The power and office of the intellect and will in man before the fall. Man's free will. This freedom lost by the fall—a fact unknown to philosophers. The delusion of Pelagians and Papists. Objection as to the fall of man when free, refuted.

1. WE have now to speak of the creation of man, not only because of all the works of God it is the noblest, and most admirable specimen of his justice, wisdom, and goodness, but, as we observed at the outset, we cannot clearly and properly know God unless the knowledge of ourselves be added. This knowledge is twofold,—relating, first, to the condition in which we were at first created; and, secondly, to our condition such as it began to be immediately after Adam's fall. For it would little avail us to know how we were created if we remained ignorant of the corruption and degradation of our nature in consequence of the fall. At present, however, we confine ourselves to a consideration of our nature in its original integrity. And, certainly, before we descend to the miserable condition into which man has fallen, it is of importance to consider what he was at first. For there is need of caution, lest we attend only to the natural ills of man, and thereby seem to ascribe them to the Author of nature; impiety deeming it a sufficient defence if it can pretend that everything vicious in it proceeded in some sense from God, and not hesitating, when accused, to plead against God, and throw the blame of its guilt upon Him. Those who would be thought to speak more reverently of the Deity catch at an excuse for their depravity from nature, not considering that they also, though more obscurely, bring a charge against God, on whom the dishonour would fall if anything vicious were proved to exist in nature. Seeing, therefore, that the flesh is continually on the alert for subterfuges, by which it imagines it can remove the blame of its own wickedness from itself to some other quarter, we must diligently guard against this depraved procedure, and accordingly treat of the calamity of the human race in such a way as may cut off every evasion, and vindicate the justice of God against all who would impugn it. We shall afterwards see, in its own place, (Book II. chap. i. sec. 3,) how far mankind now are from the purity originally conferred on Adam. And, first, it is to be

observed, that when he was formed out of the dust of the ground a curb was laid on his pride—nothing being more absurd than that those should glory in their excellence who not only dwell in tabernacles of clay, but are themselves in part dust and ashes. But God having not only deigned to animate a vessel of clay, but to make it the habitation of an immortal spirit, Adam might well glory in the great liberality of his Maker.<sup>1</sup>

2. Moreover, there can be no question that man consists of a body and a soul; meaning by soul, an immortal though created essence, which is his nobler part. Sometimes he is called a spirit. But though the two terms, while they are used together, differ in their meaning, still, when spirit is used by itself it is equivalent to soul, as when Solomon speaking of death says, that the spirit returns to God who gave it, (Eccles. xii. 7.) And Christ, in commending his spirit to the Father, and Stephen his to Christ, simply mean, that when the soul is freed from the prison-house of the body, God becomes its perpetual keeper. Those who imagine that the soul is called a spirit because it is a breath or energy divinely infused into bodies, but devoid of essence, err too grossly, as is shown both by the nature of the thing, and the whole tenor of Scripture. It is true, indeed, that men cleaving too much to the earth are dull of apprehension, nay, being alienated from the Father of Lights, are so immersed in darkness as to imagine that they will not survive the grave; still the light is not so completely quenched in darkness that all sense of immortality is lost. Conscience, which, distinguishing between good and evil, responds to the judgment of God, is an undoubted sign of an immortal spirit. How could motion devoid of essence penetrate to the judgment-seat of God, and under a sense of guilt strike itself with terror? The body cannot be affected by any fear

<sup>1</sup> On man's first original, see *Calvin against Pighius*; and on the immortality of the soul, see *Calvin's Psychopannychia* and *Instructio adv. Libertinos*, c. ix. 11, 12. It is curious to see how widely the opinion of Pliny differs from the Christian doctrine: "Omnibus a suprema die eadem quæ ante primam; hic magis a morte sensus ullus aut corpori aut animæ quam ante natales. Eadem enim vanitas in futurum etiam se propagat et in mortis quoque tempora ipsa sibi vitam mentitur."—*Plin. Hist. Nat.* lib. vii. c. 56.

of spiritual punishment. This is competent only to the soul, which must therefore be endued with essence. Then the mere knowledge of a God sufficiently proves that souls which rise higher than the world must be immortal, it being impossible that any evanescent vigour could reach the very fountain of life. In fine, while the many noble faculties with which the human mind is endued proclaim that something divine is engraven on it, they are so many evidences of an immortal essence. For such sense as the lower animals possess goes not beyond the body, or at least not beyond the objects actually presented to it. But the swiftness with which the human mind glances from heaven to earth, scans the secrets of nature, and, after it has embraced all ages, with intellect and memory digests each in its proper order, and reads the future in the past, clearly demonstrates that there lurks in man a something separated from the body. We have intellect by which we are able to conceive of the invisible God and angels—a thing of which body is altogether incapable. We have ideas of rectitude, justice, and honesty—ideas which the bodily senses cannot reach. The seat of these ideas must therefore be a spirit. Nay, sleep itself, which stupifying the man, seems even to deprive him of life, is no obscure evidence of immortality; not only suggesting thoughts of things which never existed, but foreboding future events. I briefly touch on topics which even profane writers describe with a more splendid eloquence. For pious readers, a simple reference is sufficient. Were not the soul some kind of essence separated from the body, Scripture would not teach<sup>1</sup> that we dwell in houses of clay, and at death remove from a tabernacle of flesh; that we put off that which is corruptible, in order that, at the last day, we may finally receive according to the deeds done in the body. These, and similar passages which everywhere occur, not only clearly distinguish the soul from the body, but by giving it the name of man, intimate that it is his principal part. Again, when Paul exhorts believers

<sup>1</sup> Job iv. 19; 2 Cor. v. 4; 2 Pet. i. 13, 14; 2 Cor. v. 10; vii. 1; 1 Pet. ii. 25; i. 9; ii. 11; Heb. xiii. 17; 2 Cor. i. 23; Matth. x. 28; Luke xii. 5; Heb. xii. 9; Luke xvi. 22; 2 Cor. v. 6, 8; Acts xxiii. 8.



to cleanse themselves from all filthiness of the flesh and the spirit, he shows that there are two parts in which the taint of sin resides. Peter, also, in calling Christ the Shepherd and Bishop of souls, would have spoken absurdly if there were no souls towards which he might discharge such an office. Nor would there be any ground for what he says concerning the eternal salvation of souls, or for his injunction to purify our souls, or for his assertion that fleshly lusts war against the soul; neither could the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews say, that pastors watch as those who must give an account for our souls, if souls were devoid of essence. To the same effect Paul calls God to witness upon his soul, which could not be brought to trial before God if incapable of suffering punishment. This is still more clearly expressed by our Saviour, when he bids us fear him who, after he hath killed the body, is able also to cast into hell fire. Again, when the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews distinguishes the fathers of our flesh from God, who alone is the Father of our spirits, he could not have asserted the essence of the soul in clearer terms. Moreover, did not the soul, when freed from the fetters of the body, continue to exist, our Saviour would not have represented the soul of Lazarus as enjoying blessedness in Abraham's bosom, while, on the contrary, that of Dives was suffering dreadful torments. Paul assures us of the same thing when he says, that so long as we are present in the body we are absent from the Lord. Not to dwell on a matter as to which there is little obscurity, I will only add, that Luke mentions among the errors of the Sadducees that they believed neither angel nor spirit.

3. A strong proof of this point may be gathered from its being said, that man was created in the image of God. For though the divine glory is displayed in man's outward appearance, it cannot be doubted that the proper seat of the image is in the soul. I deny not, indeed, that external shape, in so far as it distinguishes and separates us from the lower animals, brings us nearer to God; nor will I vehemently oppose any who may choose to include under the image of God that



“ While the mute creation downward bend  
 Their sight, and to their earthly mother tend,  
 Man looks aloft, and with erected eyes,  
 Beholds his own hereditary skies.”<sup>1</sup>

Only let it be understood, that the image of God which is beheld or made conspicuous by these external marks, is spiritual. For Osiander, (whose writings exhibit a perverse ingenuity in futile devices,) extending the image of God indiscriminately as well to the body as to the soul, confounds heaven with earth. He says, that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, placed their image in man, because, even though Adam had stood entire, Christ would still have become man. Thus, according to him, the body which was destined for Christ was a model and type of that corporeal figure which was then formed. But where does he find that Christ is an image of the Spirit? I admit, indeed, that in the person of the Mediator, the glory of the whole Godhead is displayed: but how can the eternal Word, who in order precedes the Spirit, be called his image? In short, the distinction between the Son and the Spirit is destroyed when the former is represented as the image of the latter. Moreover, I should like to know in what respect Christ in the flesh in which he was clothed resembles the Holy Spirit, and by what marks, or lineaments, the likeness is expressed. And since the expression, “Let us make man in our own image,” is used in the person of the Son also, it follows that he is the image of himself—a thing utterly absurd. Add that, according to the figment of Osiander,<sup>2</sup> Adam was formed after the model or type of the man Christ. Hence Christ, in as much as he was to be clothed with flesh, was the idea according to which Adam was formed, whereas the Scriptures teach very differently, viz., that he was formed in the image of God. There is more plausibility in the imagination of those who interpret that Adam was created in the image of God, because it was conformable to Christ,

<sup>1</sup> Ovid, *Metam.* Lib. I.—*Dryden's Translation.*

<sup>2</sup> As to Osiander's absurd fancy, see Book II. cap. 12, sec. 5, sq. In Rom. viii. 3, Christ is said to have been sent by the Father in the likeness of sinful flesh, but nowhere is Adam said to have been formed in the likeness of Christ's future flesh, although Tertullian somewhere says so.

who is the only image of God ; but not even for this is there any solid foundation. The “image” and “likeness” has given rise to no small discussion ; interpreters searching without cause for a difference between the two terms, since “likeness” is merely added by way of exposition. First, we know that repetitions are common in Hebrew, which often gives two words for one thing ; and, secondly, there is no ambiguity in the thing itself, man being called the image of God because of his likeness to God. Hence there is an obvious absurdity in those who indulge in philosophical speculation as to these names, placing the *Zelem*, that is, the image, in the substance of the soul, and the *Demuth*, that is, the likeness, in its qualities, and so forth. God having determined to create man in his own image, to remove the obscurity which was in this term, adds, by way of explanation, in *his likeness*, as if he had said, that he would make man, in whom he would, as it were, image himself by means of the marks of resemblance impressed upon him. Accordingly, Moses, shortly after repeating the account, puts down the image of God twice, and makes no mention of the likeness. Osiander frivolously objects that it is not a part of the man, or the soul with its faculties, which is called the image of God, but the whole Adam, who received his name from the dust out of which he was taken. I call the objection frivolous, as all sound readers will judge. For though the whole man is called mortal, the soul is not therefore liable to death, nor when he is called a rational animal is reason or intelligence thereby attributed to the body. Hence, although the soul is not the man, there is no absurdity in holding that he is called the image of God in respect of the soul ; though I retain the principle which I lately laid down, that the image of God extends to everything in which the nature of man surpasses that of all other species of animals. Accordingly, by this term is denoted the integrity with which Adam was endued when his intellect was clear, his affections subordinated to reason, all his senses duly regulated, and when he truly ascribed all his excellence to the admirable gifts of his Maker. And though the primary seat of the divine image was in the mind and the

heart, or in the soul and its powers, there was no part even of the body in which some rays of glory did not shine. It is certain that in every part of the world some lineaments of divine glory are beheld, and hence we may infer, that when his image is placed in man, there is a kind of tacit antithesis, as it were, setting man apart from the crowd, and exalting him above all the other creatures. But it cannot be denied that the angels also were created in the likeness of God, since, as Christ declares, (Matth. xxii. 30,) our highest perfection will consist in being like them. But it is not without good cause that Moses commends the favour of God towards us by giving us this peculiar title, the more especially that he was only comparing man with the visible creation.

4. But our definition of the image seems not to be complete until it appears more clearly what the faculties are in which man excels, and in which he is to be regarded as a mirror of the divine glory. This, however, cannot be better known than from the remedy provided for the corruption of nature. It cannot be doubted that when Adam lost his first estate he became alienated from God. Wherefore, although we grant that the image of God was not utterly effaced and destroyed in him, it was, however, so corrupted, that any thing which remains is fearful deformity; and, therefore, our deliverance begins with that renovation which we obtain from Christ, who is, therefore, called the second Adam, because he restores us to true and substantial integrity. For although Paul, contrasting the quickening Spirit which believers receive from Christ, with the living soul which Adam was created, (1 Cor. xv. 45,) commends the richer measure of grace bestowed in regeneration, he does not, however, contradict the statement, that the end of regeneration is to form us anew in the image of God. Accordingly, he elsewhere shows that the new man is renewed after the image of him that created him, (Col. iii. 19.) To this corresponds another passage, "Put ye on the new man, who after God is created," (Eph. iv. 24.) We must now see what particulars Paul comprehends under this renovation. In the first place, he mentions knowledge, and in the second, true righteousness and holiness. Hence we infer, that at the beginning the



image of God was manifested by light of intellect, rectitude of heart, and the soundness of every part. For though I admit that the forms of expression are elliptical, this principle cannot be overthrown, viz., that the leading feature in the renovation of the divine image must also have held the highest place in its creation. To the same effect Paul elsewhere says, that, beholding the glory of Christ with unveiled face, we are transformed into the same image. We now see how Christ is the most perfect image of God, into which we are so renewed as to bear the image of God in knowledge, purity, righteousness, and true holiness. This being established, the imagination of Osiander, as to bodily form, vanishes of its own accord. As to that passage of St Paul, (1 Cor. xi. 7,) in which the man alone, to the express exclusion of the woman, is called the image and glory of God, it is evident, from the context, that it merely refers to civil order. I presume it has already been sufficiently proved, that the image comprehends everything which has any relation to the spiritual and eternal life. The same thing, in different terms, is declared by St John when he says, that the light which was from the beginning, in the eternal Word of God, was the light of man, (John i. 4.) His object being to extol the singular grace of God in making man excel the other animals, he at the same time shows how he was formed in the image of God, that he may separate him from the common herd, as possessing not ordinary animal existence, but one which combines with it the light of intelligence. Therefore, as the image of God constitutes the entire excellence of human nature, as it shone in Adam before his fall, but was afterwards vitiated and almost destroyed, nothing remaining but a ruin, confused, mutilated, and tainted with impurity, so it is now partly seen in the elect, in so far as they are regenerated by the Spirit. Its full lustre, however, will be displayed in heaven. But in order to know the particular properties in which it consists, it will be proper to treat of the faculties of the soul. For there is no solidity in Augustine's speculation,<sup>1</sup> that the soul is a

<sup>1</sup> See Aug. *Lib. de Trin.* 10, et *Lib. de Civit. Dei*, 11. See farther, Calvin, in *Psychopannychia et Comment. in Genes.*



mirror of the Trinity, inasmuch as it comprehends within itself, intellect, will, and memory. Nor is there probability in the opinion of those who place likeness to God in the dominion bestowed upon man, as if he only resembled God in this, that he is appointed lord and master of all things. The likeness must be within, in himself. It must be something which is not external to him, but is properly the internal good of the soul.

5. But before I proceed farther, it is necessary to advert to the dream of the Manichees, which Servetus has attempted in our day to revive. Because it is said that God breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life, (Gen. ii. 7,) they thought that the soul was a transmission of the substance of God; as if some portion of the boundless divinity had passed into man. It cannot take long time to show how many gross and foul absurdities this devilish error carries in its train. For if the soul of man is a portion transmitted from the essence of God, the divine nature must not only be liable to passion and change, but also to ignorance, evil desires, infirmity, and all kinds of vice. There is nothing more inconstant than man, contrary movements agitating and distracting his soul. He is ever and anon deluded by want of skill, and overcome by the slightest temptations; while every one feels that the soul itself is a receptacle for all kinds of pollution. All these things must be attributed to the divine nature, if we hold that the soul is of the essence of God, or a secret influx of divinity. Who does not shudder at a thing so monstrous? Paul, indeed, quoting from Aratus, tells us we are his offspring, (Acts xvii. 28;) not in substance, however, but in quality, in as much as he has adorned us with divine endowments. Meanwhile, to lacerate the essence of the Creator, in order to assign a portion to each individual, is the height of madness. It must, therefore, be held as certain, that souls, notwithstanding of their having the divine image engraven on them, are created just as angels are. Creation, however, is not a transfusion of essence,<sup>1</sup> but a commencement of it out of nothing. Nor, though the

<sup>1</sup> The French adds, "comme si on tiroit le vin d'un vaisseau en une bouteille;"—as if one were to draw wine out of a cask into a bottle.

spirit is given by God, and when it quits the flesh again returns to him, does it follow that it is a portion withdrawn from his essence.<sup>1</sup> Here, too, Osiander, carried away by his illusions, entangled himself in an impious error, by denying that the image of God could be in man without his essential righteousness; as if God were unable, by the mighty power of his Spirit, to render us conformable to himself, unless Christ were substantially transfused into us. Under whatever colour some attempt to gloss these delusions, they can never so blind the eyes of intelligent readers as to prevent them from discerning in them a revival of Manicheism. But from the words of Paul, when treating of the removal of the image, (2 Cor. iii. 18,) the inference is obvious, that man was conformable to God, not by an influx of substance, but by the grace and virtue of the Spirit. He says, that by beholding the glory of Christ, we are transformed into the same image as by the Spirit of the Lord; and certainly the Spirit does not work in us so as to make us of the same substance with God.

6. It were vain to seek a definition of the soul from philosophers, not one of whom, with the exception of Plato, distinctly maintained its immortality. Others of the school of Socrates, indeed, lean the same way, but still without teaching distinctly a doctrine of which they were not fully persuaded. Plato, however, advanced still further, and regarded the soul as an image of God. Others so attach its powers and faculties to the present life, that they leave nothing external to the body. Moreover, having already shown from Scripture that the substance of the soul is incorporeal, we must now add, that though it is not properly enclosed by space, it however occupies the body as a kind of habitation, not only animating all its parts, and rendering the organs fit and useful for their actions, but also holding the first place in regulating the conduct. This it does not merely in regard to the offices of a terrestrial life, but also in regard to the service of God. This, though not clearly seen in our corrupt state, yet

<sup>1</sup> The French is, "qu'il le coupe de sa substance comme une branche d'arbre;"—that he cuts it from his substance like a branch from a tree.

the impress of its remains is seen in our very vices. For whence have men such a thirst for glory but from a sense of shame? And whence this sense of shame but from a respect for what is honourable? Of this, the first principle and source is a consciousness that they were born to cultivate righteousness,—a consciousness akin to religion. But as man was undoubtedly created to meditate on the heavenly life, so it is certain that the knowledge of it was engraven on the soul. And, indeed, man would want the principal use of his understanding if he were unable to discern his felicity, the perfection of which consists in being united to God. Hence, the principal action of the soul is to aspire thither, and, accordingly, the more a man studies to approach to God, the more he proves himself to be endued with reason.

Though there is some plausibility in the opinion of those who maintain that man has more than one soul, namely, a sentient and a rational, yet as there is no soundness in their arguments, we must reject it, unless we would torment ourselves with things frivolous and useless. They tell us, (see chap. v. sec. 4,) there is a great repugnance between organic movements and the rational part of the soul. As if reason also were not at variance with herself, and her counsels sometimes conflicting with each other like hostile armies. But since this disorder results from the depravation of nature, it is erroneous to infer that there are two souls, because the faculties do not accord so harmoniously as they ought. But I leave it to philosophers to discourse more subtilely of these faculties. For the edification of the pious, a simple definition will be sufficient. I admit, indeed, that what they ingeniously teach on the subject is true, and not only pleasant, but also useful to be known; nor do I forbid any who are inclined to prosecute the study. First, I admit that there are five senses, which Plato (in *Theæteto*) prefers calling organs, by which all objects are brought into a common sensorium, as into a kind of receptacle:<sup>1</sup> Next comes the imagination, (*phantasia*), which distinguishes between the objects brought

<sup>1</sup> The French is, “ Et que par iceux comme par canaux, tous objects qui se presentent à la veüe, au goust, ou au flair, ou a l'attouchement distillent au sens commun, comme en une cisterne qui reçoit d'un coté



into the sensorium : Next, reason, to which the general power of judgment belongs : And, lastly, intellect, which contemplates with fixed and quiet look whatever reason discursively revolves. In like manner,<sup>1</sup> to intellect, fancy, and reason, the three cognitive faculties of the soul, correspond three appetitive faculties, viz., will, whose office is to choose whatever reason and intellect propound ; irascibility, which seizes on what is set before it by reason and fancy ; and concupiscence, which lays hold of the objects presented by sense and fancy.

Though these things are true, or at least plausible, still, as I fear they are more fitted to entangle, by their obscurity, than to assist us, I think it best to omit them. If any one chooses to distribute the powers of the mind in a different manner, calling one appetitive, which, though devoid of reason, yet obeys reason, if directed from a different quarter, and another intellectual, as being by itself participant of reason, I have no great objection. Nor am I disposed to quarrel with the view, that there are three principles of action, viz., sense, intellect, and appetite. But let us rather adopt a division adapted to all capacities—a thing which certainly is not to be obtained from philosophers. For they,<sup>2</sup> when they would speak most plainly, divide the soul into appetite and intellect, but make both double. To the latter they sometimes give the name of *contemplative*, as being contented with mere knowledge, and having no active power—(which circumstance makes Cicero designate it by the name of intellect, *ingenii*,) (De Fin. lib. v.) At other times they give it the name of *practical*, because it variously moves the will by the apprehension of good or evil. Under this class is included the art of living well and justly. The former, viz., appetite, they divide into will and concupiscence, calling it *βουλησις*, whenever the appetite, which they call *ὁρμη*, obeys the reason. But when appetite, casting off the yoke of reason, runs to intemperance, they call it *παθος*.

et d'autre.”—“ And that by them as by channels, all objects which present themselves to the sight, taste, smell, or touch, drop into the common sensorium, as into a cistern which receives on either side.”

<sup>1</sup> See Arist. lib. i. Ethic. cap. ult. ; item, lib. vi. cap. 2.

<sup>2</sup> See Themist. lib. iii. De Anima, 49, De Dupl. Intellectu.



Thus they always presuppose in man a reason by which he is able to guide himself aright.

7. From this method of teaching we are forced somewhat to dissent. For philosophers, being unacquainted with the corruption of nature, which is the punishment of revolt, erroneously confound two states of man which are very different from each other. Let us therefore hold, for the purpose of the present work, that the soul consists of two parts, the intellect and the will, (Book II. chap. ii. sec. 2, 12,)—the office of the intellect being to distinguish between objects, according as they seem deserving of being approved or disapproved; and the office of the will, to choose and follow what the intellect declares to be good, to reject and shun what it declares to be bad, (Plato, in Phædro.) We dwell not on the subtlety of Aristotle, that the mind has no motion of itself; but that the moving power is choice, which he also terms the appetive intellect. Not to lose ourselves in superfluous questions, let it be enough to know that the intellect is to us, as it were, the guide and ruler of the soul; that the will always follows its beck, and waits for its decision, in matters of desire. For which reason Aristotle truly taught, that in the appetite there is a pursuit and rejection corresponding in some degree to affirmation and negation in the intellect, (Aristot. Ethic. lib. vi. c. 2.) Moreover, it will be seen in another place, (Book II. c. ii. sec. 12–26,) how surely the intellect governs the will. Here we only wish to observe, that the soul does not possess any faculty which may not be duly referred to one or other of these members. And in this way we comprehend sense under intellect. Others distinguish thus: They say that sense inclines to pleasure in the same way as the intellect to good; that hence the appetite of sense becomes concupiscence and lust, while the affection of the intellect becomes will. For the term appetite, which they prefer, I use that of will, as being more common.

8. Therefore, God has provided the soul of man with intellect, by which he might discern good from evil, just from unjust, and might know what to follow or to shun, reason going before with her lamp; whence philosophers, in

reference to her directing power, have called her *το ἡγεμονικον*. To this he has joined will, to which choice belongs. Man excelled in these noble endowments in his primitive condition, when reason, intelligence, prudence, and judgment, not only sufficed for the government of his earthly life, but also enabled him to rise up to God and eternal happiness. Thereafter choice was added to direct the appetites, and temper all the organic motions; the will being thus perfectly submissive to the authority of reason. In this upright state, man possessed freedom of will, by which, if he chose, he was able to obtain eternal life. It were here unseasonable to introduce the question concerning the secret predestination of God, because we are not considering what might or might not happen, but what the nature of man truly was. Adam, therefore, might have stood if he chose, since it was only by his own will that he fell; but it was because his will was pliable in either direction, and he had not received constancy to persevere, that he so easily fell. Still he had a free choice of good and evil; and not only so, but in the mind and will there was the highest rectitude, and all the organic parts were duly framed to obedience, until man corrupted its good properties, and destroyed himself. Hence the great darkness of philosophers who have looked for a complete building in a ruin, and fit arrangement in disorder. The principle they set out with was, that man could not be a rational animal unless he had a free choice of good and evil. They also imagined that the distinction between virtue and vice was destroyed, if man did not of his own counsel arrange his life. So far well, had there been no change in man. This being unknown to them, it is not surprising that they throw every thing into confusion. But those who, while they profess to be the disciples of Christ, still seek for free-will in man, notwithstanding of his being lost and drowned in spiritual destruction, labour under manifold delusion, making a heterogeneous mixture of inspired doctrine and philosophical opinions, and so erring as to both. But it will be better to leave these things to their own place, (see Book II. chap. ii.) At present it is necessary only to remember, that man, at his first creation, was very different from all his

posterity; who, deriving their origin from him after he was corrupted, received a hereditary taint. At first every part of the soul was formed to rectitude. There was soundness of mind and freedom of will to choose the good. If any one objects that it was placed, as it were, in a slippery position, because its power was weak, I answer, that the degree conferred was sufficient to take away every excuse. For surely the Deity could not be tied down to this condition,—to make man such, that he either could not or would not sin. Such a nature might have been more excellent;<sup>1</sup> but to expostulate with God as if he had been bound to confer this nature on man, is more than unjust, seeing He had full right to determine how much or how little He would give. Why He did not sustain him by the virtue of perseverance is hidden in his counsel; it is ours to keep within the bounds of soberness. Man had received the power, if he had the will, but he had not the will which would have given the power; for this will would have been followed by perseverance. Still, after he had received so much, there is no excuse for his having spontaneously brought death upon himself. No necessity was laid upon God to give him more than that intermediate and even transient will, that out of man's fall he might extract materials for his own glory.

<sup>1</sup> See August. lib. xi., super Gen. cap. vii. viii. ix., and De Corrept. et Gratia ad Valent., cap. xi.



## CHAPTER XVI.

THE WORLD, CREATED BY GOD, STILL CHERISHED AND PROTECTED BY HIM. EACH AND ALL OF ITS PARTS GOVERNED BY HIS PROVIDENCE.

The divisions of this chapter are, I. The doctrine of the special providence of God over all the creatures, singly and collectively, as opposed to the dreams of the Epicureans about fortune and fortuitous causes. II. The fiction of the Sophists concerning the omnipotence of God, and the error of philosophers, as to a confused and equivocal government of the world, sec. 1-5. All animals, but especially mankind, from the peculiar superintendence exercised over them, are proofs, evidences, and examples of the providence of God, sec. 6, 7. III. A consideration of fate, fortune, chance, contingency, and uncertain events, (on which the matter here under discussion turns.)

*Sections.*

1. Even the wicked, under the guidance of carnal sense, acknowledge that God is the Creator. The godly acknowledge not this only, but that he is a most wise and powerful governor and preserver of all created objects. In so doing, they lean on the Word of God, some passages from which are produced.
2. Refutation of the Epicureans, who oppose fortune and fortuitous causes to Divine Providence, as taught in Scripture. The sun, a bright manifestation of Divine Providence.
3. Figment of the Sophists as to an indolent Providence refuted. Consideration of the Omnipotence as combined with the Providence of God. Double benefit resulting from a proper acknowledgment of the Divine Omnipotence. Cavils of Infidelity.
4. A definition of Providence refuting the erroneous dogmas of Philosophers. Dreams of the Epicureans and Peripatetics.
5. Special Providence of God asserted and proved by arguments founded on a consideration of the Divine Justice and Mercy. Proved also by passages of Scripture, relating to the sky, the earth, and animals.
6. Special Providence proved by passages relating to the human race, and the more especially that for its sake the world was created.
7. Special Providence proved, lastly, from examples taken from the history of the Israelites, of Jonah, Jacob, and from daily experience.
8. Erroneous views as to Providence refuted:—I. The sect of the Stoics.  
II. The fortune and chance of the Heathen.



9. How things are said to be fortuitous to us, though done by the determinate counsel of God. Example. Error of separating contingency and event from the secret, but just, and most wise counsel of God. Two examples.

1. It were cold and lifeless to represent God as a momentary Creator, who completed his work once for all, and then left it. Here, especially, we must dissent from the profane, and maintain that the presence of the divine power is conspicuous, not less in the perpetual condition of the world than in its first creation. For, although even wicked men are forced, by the mere view of the earth and sky, to rise to the Creator, yet faith has a method of its own in assigning the whole praise of creation to God. To this effect is the passage of the Apostle already quoted, that by faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the Word of God, (Heb. xi. 3 ;) because, without proceeding to his Providence, we cannot understand the full force of what is meant by God being the Creator, how much soever we may seem to comprehend it with our mind, and confess it with our tongue. The carnal mind, when once it has perceived the power of God in the creation, stops there, and, at the farthest, thinks and ponders on nothing else than the wisdom, power, and goodness, displayed by the Author of such a work, (matters which rise spontaneously, and force themselves on the notice even of the unwilling,) or on some general agency on which the power of motion depends, exercised in preserving and governing it. In short, it imagines that all things are sufficiently sustained by the energy divinely infused into them at first. But faith must penetrate deeper. After learning that there is a Creator, it must forthwith infer that he is also a Governor and Preserver, and that, not by producing a kind of general motion in the machine of the globe as well as in each of its parts, but by a special providence sustaining, cherishing, superintending, all the things which he has made, to the very minutest, even to a sparrow. Thus David, after briefly premising that the world was created by God, immediately descends to the continual course of Providence, "By the word of the Lord were the heavens framed, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth ;"

immediately adding, "The Lord looketh from heaven, he beholdeth the children of men," (Ps. xxxiii. 6, 13, &c.) He subjoins other things to the same effect. For although all do not reason so accurately, yet because it would not be credible that human affairs were superintended by God, unless he were the maker of the world, and no one could seriously believe that he is its Creator without feeling convinced that he takes care of his works; David, with good reason, and in admirable order, leads us from the one to the other. In general, indeed, philosophers teach, and the human mind conceives, that all the parts of the world are invigorated by the secret inspiration of God. They do not, however, reach the height to which David rises, taking all the pious along with him, when he says, "These wait all upon thee, that thou mayest give them their meat in due season. That thou givest them they gather: thou openest thine hand, they are filled with good. Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled: thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust. Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created, and thou renewest the face of the earth," (Ps. civ. 27-30.) Nay, though they subscribe to the sentiment of Paul, that in God "we live, and move, and have our being," (Acts xvii. 28,) yet they are far from having a serious apprehension of the grace which he commends, because they have not the least relish for that special care in which alone the paternal favour of God is discerned.

2. That this distinction may be the more manifest, we must consider that the Providence of God, as taught in Scripture, is opposed to fortune and fortuitous causes. By an erroneous opinion prevailing in all ages, an opinion almost universally prevailing in our own day, viz., that all things happen fortuitously, the true doctrine of Providence has not only been obscured, but almost buried. If one falls among robbers, or ravenous beasts; if a sudden gust of wind at sea causes shipwreck; if one is struck down by the fall of a house or a tree; if another, when wandering through desert paths, meets with deliverance; or, after being tossed by the waves, arrives in port, and makes some wondrous hair-breadth escape from death—all these occurrences,

prosperous as well as adverse, carnal sense will attribute to fortune. But whoso has learned from the mouth of Christ that all the hairs of his head are numbered, (Matth. x. 30,) will look farther for the cause, and hold that all events whatsoever are governed by the secret counsel of God. With regard to inanimate objects, again, we must hold that though each is possessed of its peculiar properties, yet all of them exert their force only in so far as directed by the immediate hand of God. Hence they are merely instruments, into which God constantly infuses what energy he sees meet, and turns and converts to any purpose at his pleasure. No created object makes a more wonderful or glorious display than the sun. For, besides illuminating the whole world with its brightness, how admirably does it foster and invigorate all animals by its heat, and fertilize the earth by its rays, warming the seeds of grain in its lap, and thereby calling forth the verdant blade! This it supports, increases, and strengthens with additional nurture, till it rises into the stalk; and still feeds it with perpetual moisture, till it comes into flower; and from flower to fruit, which it continues to ripen till it attains maturity. In like manner, by its warmth trees and vines bud, and put forth first their leaves, then their blossom, then their fruit. And the Lord, that he might claim the entire glory of these things as his own, was pleased that light should exist, and that the earth should be replenished with all kinds of herbs and fruits before he made the sun. No pious man, therefore, will make the sun either the necessary or principal cause of those things which existed before the creation of the sun, but only the instrument which God employs, because he so pleases; though he can lay it aside, and act equally well by himself. Again, when we read, that at the prayer of Joshua the sun was stayed in its course, (Josh. x. 13;) that as a favour to Hezekiah, its shadow receded ten degrees, (2 Kings xx. 11;) by these miracles God declared that the sun does not daily rise and set by a blind instinct of nature, but is governed by Him in its course, that he may renew the remembrance of his paternal favour toward us. Nothing is more natural than for spring, in its turn, to succeed winter,



summer spring, and autumn summer ; but in this series the variations are so great and so unequal as to make it very apparent that every single year, month, and day, is regulated by a new and special providence of God.

3. And truly God claims omnipotence to himself, and would have us to acknowledge it,—not the vain, indolent, slumbering omnipotence which sophists feign, but vigilant, efficacious, energetic, and ever active,—not an omnipotence which may only act as a general principle of confused motion, as in ordering a stream to keep within the channel once prescribed to it, but one which is intent on individual and special movements. God is deemed omnipotent, not because he can act though he may cease or be idle, or because by a general instinct he continues the order of nature previously appointed ; but because, governing heaven and earth by his providence, he so overrules all things that nothing happens without his counsel. For when it is said in the Psalms, “ He hath done whatsoever he hath pleased,” (Ps. cxv. 3,) the thing meant is his sure and deliberate purpose. It were insipid to interpret the Psalmist’s words in philosophic fashion, to mean that God is the primary agent, because the beginning and cause of all motion. This rather is the solace of the faithful, in their adversity, that every thing which they endure is by the ordination and command of God, that they are under his hand. But if the government of God thus extends to all his works, it is a childish cavil to confine it to natural influx.<sup>1</sup> Those, moreover, who confine the providence of God within narrow limits, as if he allowed all things to be borne along freely according to a perpetual law of nature, do not more defraud God of his glory than themselves of a most useful doctrine ; for nothing were more wretched than man if he were exposed to all possible movements of the sky, the air, the earth, and the water. We may add, that by this view the singular goodness of God towards each individual is unbecomingly impaired. David exclaims, (Ps. viii. 3,) that infants hanging at their mothers’ breasts are eloquent enough to cele-

<sup>1</sup> See Hyperius in *Methodo Theologiæ*.



brate the glory of God, because, from the very moment of their birth, they find an aliment prepared for them by heavenly care. Indeed, if we do not shut our eyes and senses to the fact, we must see that some mothers have full provision for their infants, and others almost none, according as it is the pleasure of God to nourish one child more liberally, and another more sparingly. Those who attribute due praise to the omnipotence of God thereby derive a double benefit. He to whom heaven and earth belong, and whose nod all creatures must obey, is fully able to reward the homage which they pay to him, and they can rest secure in the protection of Him to whose control everything that could do them harm is subject, by whose authority, Satan, with all his furies and engines, is curbed as with a bridle, and on whose will everything adverse to our safety depends. In this way, and in no other, can the immoderate and superstitious fears, excited by the dangers to which we are exposed, be calmed or subdued. I say superstitious fears. For such they are, as often as the dangers threatened by any created objects inspire us with such terror, that we tremble as if they had in themselves a power to hurt us, or could hurt at random or by chance; or as if we had not in God a sufficient protection against them. For example, Jeremiah forbids the children of God "to be dismayed at the signs of heaven, as the heathen are dismayed at them," (Jer. x. 2.) He does not, indeed, condemn every kind of fear. But as unbelievers transfer the government of the world from God to the stars, imagining that happiness or misery depends on their decrees or presages, and not on the Divine will, the consequence is, that their fear, which ought to have reference to him only, is diverted to stars and comets. Let him, therefore, who would beware of such unbelief, always bear in mind, that there is no random power, or agency, or motion in the creatures, who are so governed by the secret counsel of God, that nothing happens but what he has knowingly and willingly decreed.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Calvin *adversus Astrolog. Judiciariam*. August. *De Ordine*, lib. ii. cap. 15.

4. First, then, let the reader remember that the providence we mean is not one by which the Deity, sitting idly in heaven, looks on at what is taking place in the world, but one by which he, as it were, holds the helm, and overrules all events. Hence his providence extends not less to the hand than to the eye.<sup>1</sup> When Abraham said to his son, *God will provide*, (Gen. xxii. 8,) he meant not merely to assert that the future event was foreknown to God, but to resign the management of an unknown business to the will of Him whose province it is to bring perplexed and dubious matters to a happy result. Hence it appears that providence consists in action. What many talk of bare prescience is the merest trifling. Those do not err quite so grossly who attribute government to God, but still, as I have observed, a confused and promiscuous government which consists in giving an impulse and general movement to the machine of the globe and each of its parts, but does not specially direct the action of every creature. It is impossible, however, to tolerate this error. For, according to its abettors, there is nothing in this providence, which they call universal, to prevent all the creatures from being moved contingently, or to prevent man from turning himself in this direction or in that, according to the mere freedom of his own will. In this way, they make man a partner with God,—God, by his energy, impressing man with the movement by which he can act, agreeably to the nature conferred upon him, while man voluntarily regulates his own actions. In short, their doctrine is, that the world, the affairs of men, and men themselves, are governed by the power, but not by the decree of God. I say nothing of the Epicureans, (a pest with which the world has always been plagued,) who dream of an inert and idle God,<sup>2</sup> and others, not a whit sounder, who of old feigned that God rules the upper regions of

<sup>1</sup> The French adds, “Cest à dire, que non seulement il voit, mais aussi ordonne ce qu’il veut estre fait;”—“that is to say, he not only sees, but ordains what he wills to be done.”

<sup>2</sup> Plin. lib. ii. c. 7. “Irridendum vero, agere curam rerum humanarum, illud, quicquid est, summum. Anne tam tristi atque multiplici ministerio non pollui credamus dubitemusve?”

the air, but leaves the inferior to Fortune. Against such evident madness even dumb creatures lift their voice.

My intention now is, to refute an opinion which has very generally obtained—an opinion which, while it concedes to God some blind and equivocal movement, withholds what is of principal moment, viz., the disposing and directing of every thing to its proper end by incomprehensible wisdom. By withholding government, it makes God the ruler of the world in name only, not in reality. For what, I ask, is meant by government, if it be not to preside so as to regulate the destiny of that over which you preside? I do not, however, totally repudiate what is said of an universal providence, provided, on the other hand, it is conceded to me that the world is governed by God, not only because he maintains the order of nature appointed by him, but because he takes a special charge of every one of his works. It is true, indeed, that each species of created objects is moved by a secret instinct of nature, as if they obeyed the eternal command of God, and spontaneously followed the course which God at first appointed. And to this we may refer our Saviour's words, that he and his Father have always been at work from the beginning, (John v. 17;) also the words of Paul, that "in him we live, and move, and have our being," (Acts xvii. 28;) also the words of the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, who, when wishing to prove the divinity of Christ, says, that he upholdeth "all things by the word of his power," (Heb. i. 3.) But some, under pretext of the general, hide and obscure the special providence, which is so surely and clearly taught in Scripture, that it is strange how any one can bring himself to doubt of it. And, indeed, those who interpose that disguise are themselves forced to modify their doctrine, by adding that many things are done by the special care of God. This, however, they erroneously confine to particular acts. The thing to be proved, therefore, is, that single events are so regulated by God, and all events so proceed from his determinate counsel, that nothing happens fortuitously.

5. Assuming that the beginning of motion belongs to God, but that all things move spontaneously or casually,



according to the impulse which nature gives, the vicissitudes of day and night, summer and winter, will be the work of God; inasmuch as he, in assigning the office of each, appointed a certain law, namely, that they should always with uniform tenor observe the same course, day succeeding night, month succeeding month, and year succeeding year. But, as at one time, excessive heat, combined with drought, burns up the fields; at another time excessive rains rot the crops, while sudden devastation is produced by tempests and storms of hail, these will not be the works of God, unless in so far as rainy or fair weather, heat or cold, are produced by the concourse of the stars, and other natural causes. According to this view, there is no place left either for the paternal favour, or the judgments of God. If it is said that God fully manifests his beneficence to the human race, by furnishing heaven and earth with the ordinary power of producing food, the explanation is meagre and heathenish: as if the fertility of one year were not a special blessing, the penury and dearth of another a special punishment and curse from God. But as it would occupy too much time to enumerate all the arguments, let the authority of God himself suffice. In the Law and the Prophets he repeatedly declares, that as often as he waters the earth with dew and rain, he manifests his favour, that by his command the heaven becomes hard as iron, the crops are destroyed by mildew and other evils, that storms and hail, in devastating the fields, are signs of sure and special vengeance. This being admitted, it is certain that not a drop of rain falls without the express command of God. David, indeed, (Ps. cxlvi. 9,) extols the general providence of God in supplying food to the young ravens that cry to him, but when God himself threatens living creatures with famine, does he not plainly declare that they are all nourished by him, at one time with scanty, at another with more ample measure? It is childish, as I have already said, to confine this to particular acts, when Christ says, without reservation, that not a sparrow falls to the ground without the will of his Father, (Matth. x. 29.) Surely, if the flight of birds is regulated by the counsel of God, we must acknowledge with the prophet,



that while he "dwelleth on high," he "humbleth himself to behold the things that are in heaven and in the earth," (Ps. cxiii. 5, 6.)

6. But as we know that it was chiefly for the sake of mankind that the world was made, we must look to this as the end which God has in view in the government of it. The prophet Jeremiah exclaims, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps," (Jer. x. 23.) Solomon again says, "Man's goings are of the Lord: how can a man then understand his own way?" (Prov. xx. 24.) Will it now be said that man is moved by God according to the bent of his nature, but that man himself gives the movement any direction he pleases? Were it truly so, man would have the full disposal of his own ways. To this it will perhaps be answered, that man can do nothing without the power of God. But the answer will not avail, since both Jeremiah and Solomon attribute to God not power only, but also election and decree. And Solomon, in another place, elegantly rebukes the rashness of men in fixing their plans without reference to God, as if they were not led by his hand. "The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord," (Prov. xvi. 1.) It is a strange infatuation, surely, for miserable man, who cannot even give utterance except in so far as God pleases, to begin to act without him! Scripture, moreover, the better to show that every thing done in the world according to his decree, declares that the things which seem most fortuitous are subject to him. For what seems more attributable to chance than the branch which falls from a tree, and kills the passing traveller? But the Lord sees very differently, and declares that He delivered him into the hand of the slayer, (Exod. xxi. 13.) In like manner, who does not attribute the lot to the blindness of Fortune? Not so the Lord, who claims the decision for himself, (Prov. xvi. 33.) He says not, that by his power the lot is thrown into the lap, and taken out, but declares that the only thing which could be attributed to chance is from him. To the same effect are the words of Solomon, "The poor and the deceitful man meet together; the Lord lighteneth both

their eyes," (Prov. xxix. 13.) For although rich and poor are mingled together in the world, in saying that the condition of each is divinely appointed, he reminds us that God, who enlightens all, has his own eye always open, and thus exhorts the poor to patient endurance, seeing that those who are discontented with their lot endeavour to shake off a burden which God has imposed upon them. Thus, too, another prophet upbraids the profane, who ascribe it to human industry, or to fortune, that some grovel in the mire while others rise to honour. "Promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another," (Ps. lxxv. 6, 7.) Because God cannot divest himself of the office of judge, he infers that to his secret counsel it is owing that some are elevated, while others remain without honour.

7. Nay, I affirm in general, that particular events are evidences of the special providence of God. In the wilderness, God caused a south wind to blow, and brought the people a plentiful supply of birds, (Exod. xix. 13.) When he desired that Jonah should be thrown into the sea, he sent forth a whirlwind. Those who deny that God holds the reins of government will say that this was contrary to ordinary practice, whereas I infer from it that no wind ever rises or rages without his special command. In no way could it be true that "he maketh the winds his messengers, and the flames of fire his ministers;" that "he maketh the clouds his chariot, and walketh upon the wings of the wind," (Ps. civ. 3, 4,) did he not at pleasure drive the clouds and winds, and therein manifest the special presence of his power. In like manner, we are elsewhere taught, that whenever the sea is raised into a storm, its billows attest the special presence of God. "He commandeth and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves." "He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still," (Ps. cvii. 25, 29.) He also elsewhere declares, that he had smitten the people with blasting and mildew, (Amos iv. 9.) Again, while man naturally possesses the power of continuing his species, God describes it as a mark of his special favour, that while some

continue childless, others are blessed with offspring : for the fruit of the womb is his gift. Hence the words of Jacob to Rachel, "Am I in God's stead, who hath withheld from thee the fruit of the womb?" (Gen. xxx. 2.) To conclude in one word. Nothing in nature is more ordinary than that we should be nourished with bread. But the Spirit declares not only that the produce of the earth is God's special gift, but "that man doth not live by bread only," (Deut. viii. 3,) because it is not mere fulness that nourishes him, but the secret blessing of God. And hence, on the other hand, he threatens to take away "the stay and the staff, the whole stay of bread, and the whole stay of water," (Is. iii. 1.) Indeed, there could be no serious meaning in our prayer for daily bread, if God did not with paternal hand supply us with food. Accordingly, to convince the faithful that God, in feeding them, fulfils the office of the best of parents, the prophet reminds them that he "giveth food to all flesh," (Ps. cxxxvi. 25.) In fine, when we hear on the one hand, that "the eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry," and, on the other hand, that "the face of the Lord is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth," (Ps. xxxiv. 15, 16,) let us be assured that all creatures above and below are ready at his service, that he may employ them in whatever way he pleases. Hence we infer, not only that the general providence of God, continuing the order of nature, extends over the creatures, but that by his wonderful counsel they are adapted to a certain and special purpose.

8. Those who would cast obloquy on this doctrine, calumniate it as the dogma of the Stoics concerning fate. The same charge was formerly brought against Augustine, (Lib. ad Bonifac. II., c. vi. et alibi.) We are unwilling to dispute about words; but we do not admit the term Fate, both because it is of the class which Paul teaches us to shun, as profane novelties, (1 Tim. vi. 20,) and also because it is attempted, by means of an odious term, to fix a stigma on the truth of God. But the dogma itself is falsely and maliciously imputed to us. For we do not with the Stoics imagine a necessity consisting of a perpetual chain of causes,



and a kind of involved series contained in nature, but we hold that God is the disposer and ruler of all things,—that from the remotest eternity, according to his own wisdom, he decreed what he was to do, and now by his power executes what he decreed. Hence we maintain, that by his providence, not heaven and earth and inanimate creatures only, but also the counsels and wills of men are so governed as to move exactly in the course which he has destined. What, then, you will say, does nothing happen fortuitously, nothing contingently? I answer, it was a true saying of Basil the Great, that Fortune and Chance are heathen terms; the meaning of which ought not to occupy pious minds. For if all success is blessing from God, and calamity and adversity are his curse, there is no place left in human affairs for fortune and chance. We ought also to be moved by the words of Augustine, (*Retract. Lib. i. cap. 1.*) “In my writings against the Academics,” says he, “I regret having so often used the term Fortune; although I intended to denote by it not some goddess, but the fortuitous issue of events in external matters, whether good or evil. Hence, too, those words, Perhaps, Perchance, Fortuitously,<sup>1</sup> which no religion forbids us to use, though everything must be referred to Divine Providence. Nor did I omit to observe this when I said, Although, perhaps, that which is vulgarly called Fortune, is also regulated by a hidden order, and what we call Chance is nothing else than that the reason and cause of which is secret. It is true, I so spoke, but I repent of having mentioned Fortune there as I did, when I see the very bad custom which men have of saying, not as they ought to do, ‘So God pleased,’ but, ‘So Fortune pleased.’” In short, Augustine everywhere teaches, that if anything is left to fortune, the world moves at random. And although he elsewhere declares, (*Quæstionum, Lib. lxxxiii.*) that all things are carried on, partly by the free will of man, and partly by the Providence of God, he shortly after shows clearly enough that his meaning was, that men also are ruled by Providence, when he assumes it as a principle, that there

<sup>1</sup> Forte, Forsan, Forsitan, Fortuito.



cannot be a greater absurdity than to hold that anything is done without the ordination of God; because it would happen at random. For which reason, he also excludes the contingency which depends on human will, maintaining a little further on, in clearer terms, that no cause must be sought for but the will of God. When he uses the term permission, the meaning which he attaches to it will best appear from a single passage, (De Trinit. Lib. iii. cap. 4,) where he proves that the will of God is the supreme and primary cause of all things, because nothing happens without his order or permission. He certainly does not figure God sitting idly in a watch-tower, when he chooses to permit anything. The will which he represents as interposing is, if I may so express it, active, (*actualis*;) and but for this could not be regarded as a cause.

9. But since our sluggish minds rest far beneath the height of Divine Providence, we must have recourse to a distinction which may assist them in rising. I say then, that though all things are ordered by the counsel and certain arrangement of God, to us, however, they are fortuitous,—not because we imagine that Fortune rules the world and mankind, and turns all things upside down at random, (far be such a heartless thought from every Christian breast;) but as the order, method, end, and necessity of events, are, for the most part, hidden in the counsel of God, though it is certain that they are produced by the will of God, they have the appearance of being fortuitous, such being the form under which they present themselves to us, whether considered in their own nature, or estimated according to our knowledge and judgment. Let us suppose, for example, that a merchant, after entering a forest in company with trust-worthy individuals, imprudently strays from his companions, and wanders bewildered till he falls into a den of robbers and is murdered. His death was not only foreseen by the eye of God, but had been fixed by his decree. For it is said, not that he foresaw how far the life of each individual should extend, but that he determined and fixed the bounds, which could not be passed, (Job xiv. 5.) Still, in relation to our capacity of discernment, all these things appear fortuitous. How will

the Christian feel? Though he will consider that every circumstance which occurred in that person's death was indeed in its nature fortuitous, he will have no doubt that the Providence of God overruled it and guided fortune to his own end. The same thing holds in the case of future contingencies. All future events being uncertain to us, seem in suspense as if ready to take either direction. Still, however, the impression remains seated in our hearts, that nothing will happen which the Lord has not provided. In this sense the term event is repeatedly used in Ecclesiastes, because, at the first glance, men do not penetrate to the primary cause which lies concealed. And yet, what is taught in Scripture of the secret providence of God was never so completely effaced from the human heart, as that some sparks did not always shine in the darkness. Thus the soothsayers of the Philistines, though they waver in uncertainty, attribute the adverse event partly to God and partly to chance. If the ark, say they, "goeth up by the way of his own coast to Bethshemish, then he hath done us this great evil; but if not, then we shall know that it is not his hand that smote us, it was a chance that happened to us," (1 Sam. vi. 9.) Foolishly, indeed, when divination fails them they flee to fortune. Still we see them constrained, so as not to venture to regard their disaster as fortuitous. But the mode in which God, by the curb of his Providence, turns events in whatever direction he pleases, will appear from a remarkable example. At the very same moment when David was discovered in the wilderness of Maon, the Philistines make an inroad into the country, and Saul is forced to depart, (1 Sam. xxiii. 26, 27.) If God, in order to provide for the safety of his servant, threw this obstacle in the way of Saul, we surely cannot say, that though the Philistines took up arms contrary to human expectation, they did it by chance. What seems to us contingency, faith will recognise as the secret impulse of God. The reason is not always equally apparent, but we ought undoubtedly to hold that all the changes which take place in the world are produced by the secret agency of the hand of God—At the same time, that which God has determined,

though it must come to pass, is not, however, precisely, or in its own nature, necessary. We have a familiar example in the case of our Saviour's bones. As he assumed a body similar to ours, no sane man will deny that his bones were capable of being broken, and yet it was impossible that they should be broken, (John xix. 33, 36.) Hence, again, we see that there was good ground for the distinction which the Schoolmen made between necessity, *secundum quid*, and necessity absolute, also between the necessity of *consequent* and *of consequence*. God made the bones of his Son frangible, though he exempted them from actual fracture; and thus, in reference to the necessity of his counsel, made that impossible which might have naturally taken place.

## CHAPTER XVII.

## USE TO BE MADE OF THE DOCTRINE OF PROVIDENCE.

This chapter may be conveniently divided into two parts :—I. A general explanation is given of the doctrine of Divine Providence, in so far as conducive to the solid instruction and consolation of the godly, sect. 1, and specially sect. 2–12. First, however, those are refuted who deny that the world is governed by the secret and incomprehensible counsel of God ; those also who throw the blame of all wickedness upon God, and absurdly pretend that exercises of piety are useless, sect. 2–5. Thereafter is added a holy meditation on Divine Providence, which, in the case of prosperity, is painted to the life, sect. 6–11.

II. A solution of two objections from passages of Scripture, which attribute repentance to God, and speak of something like an abrogation of his decrees.

*Sections.*

1. Summary of the doctrine of Divine Providence. 1. It embraces the future and the past. 2. It works by means, without means, and against means. 3. Mankind, and particularly the Church, the object of special care. 4. The mode of administration usually secret, but always just. This last point more fully considered.
2. The profane denial that the world is governed by the secret counsel of God, refuted by passages of Scripture. Salutory counsel.
3. This doctrine, as to the secret counsel of God in the government of the world, gives no countenance either to the impiety of those who throw the blame of their wickedness upon God, the petulance of those who reject means, or the error of those who neglect the duties of religion.
4. As regards future events, the doctrine of Divine Providence not inconsistent with deliberation on the part of man.
5. In regard to past events, it is absurd to argue that crimes ought not to be punished, because they are in accordance with the divine decrees. 1. The wicked resist the declared will of God. 2. They are condemned by conscience. 3. The essence and guilt of the crime is in themselves, though God uses them as instruments.
6. A holy meditation on Divine Providence. 1. All events happen by the ordination of God. 2. All things contribute to the advantage of the godly. 3. The hearts of men and all their endeavours



- are in the hand of God. 4. Providence watches for the safety of the righteous. 5. God has a special care of his elect.
7. Meditation on Providence continued. 6. God in various ways curbs and defeats the enemies of the Church. 7. He overrules all creatures, even Satan himself, for the good of his people.
8. Meditation on Providence continued. 8. He trains the godly to patience and moderation. Examples. Joseph, Job, and David.
9. He shakes off their lethargy, and urges them to repentance.
9. Meditation continued. 10. The right use of inferior causes explained. 11. When the godly become negligent or imprudent in the discharge of duty, Providence reminds them of their fault.
12. It condemns the iniquities of the wicked. 13. It produces a right consideration of the future, rendering the servants of God prudent, diligent, and active. 14. It causes them to resign themselves to the wisdom and omnipotence of God, and, at the same time, makes them diligent in their calling.
10. Meditation continued. 15. Though human life is beset with innumerable evils, the righteous, trusting to Divine Providence, feel perfectly secure.
11. The use of the foregoing meditation.
12. The second part of the chapter, disposing of two objections.
1. That Scripture represents God as changing his purpose, or repenting, and that, therefore, his Providence is not fixed. Answer to this first objection. Proof from Scripture that God cannot repent.
13. Why repentance attributed to God.
14. Second objection, that Scripture speaks of an annulment of the divine decrees. Objection answered. Answer confirmed by an example.

1. MOREOVER, such is the proneness of the human mind to indulge in vain subtleties, that it becomes almost impossible for those who do not see the sound and proper use of this doctrine, to avoid entangling themselves in perplexing difficulties. It will, therefore, be proper here to advert to the end which Scripture has in view in teaching that all things are divinely ordained. And it is to be observed, first, that the Providence of God is to be considered with reference both to the past and the future; and, secondly, that in overruling all things, it works at one time with means, at another without means, and at another against means. Lastly, the design of God is to show that He takes care of the whole human race, but is especially vigilant in governing the Church, which he favours with a closer inspection. Moreover, we must add, that although the paternal favour and

beneficence, as well as the judicial severity of God, is often conspicuous in the whole course of his Providence, yet occasionally as the causes of events are concealed, the thought is apt to rise, that human affairs are whirled about by the blind impulse of Fortune, or our carnal nature inclines us to speak as if God were amusing himself by tossing men up and down like balls. It is true, indeed, that if with sedate and quiet minds we were disposed to learn, the issue would at length make it manifest, that the counsel of God was in accordance with the highest reason, that his purpose was either to train his people to patience, correct their depraved affections, tame their wantonness, inure them to self-denial, and arouse them from torpor; or, on the other hand, to cast down the proud, defeat the craftiness of the ungodly, and frustrate all their schemes. How much soever causes may escape our notice, we must feel assured that they are deposited with him, and accordingly exclaim with David, "Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered," (Ps. xl. 5.) For while our adversities ought always to remind us of our sins, that the punishment may incline us to repentance, we see, moreover, how Christ declares there is something more in the secret counsel of his Father than to chastise every one as he deserves. For he says of the man who was born blind, "Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him," (John ix. 3.) Here, where calamity takes precedence even of birth, our carnal sense murmurs as if God were unmerciful in thus afflicting those who have not offended. But Christ declares that, provided we had eyes clear enough, we should perceive that in this spectacle the glory of his Father is brightly displayed. We must use modesty, not as it were compelling God to render an account, but so revering his hidden judgments as to account his will the best of all reasons.<sup>1</sup> When the sky is

<sup>1</sup> Here the words of Cicero admirably apply: "*Nec si ego quod tu sis sequutus, non perspicio, ideo minus existimo te nihil sine summa ratione fecisse.*"

overcast with dense clouds, and a violent tempest arises, the darkness which is presented to our eye, and the thunder which strikes our ears, and stupifies all our senses with terror, make us imagine that every thing is thrown into confusion, though in the firmament itself all continues quiet and serene. In the same way, when the tumultuous aspect of human affairs unfits us for judging, we should still hold, that God, in the pure light of his justice and wisdom, keeps all these commotions in due subordination, and conducts them to their proper end. And certainly in this matter many display monstrous infatuation, presuming to subject the works of God to their calculation, and discuss his secret counsels, as well as to pass a precipitate judgment on things unknown, and that with greater license than on the doings of mortal men. What can be more preposterous than to show modesty toward our equals, and choose rather to suspend our judgment than incur the blame of rashness, while we petulantly insult the hidden judgments of God, judgments which it becomes us to look up to and revere.

2. No man, therefore, will duly and usefully ponder on the providence of God save he who recollects that he has to do with his own Maker, and the Maker of the world, and in the exercise of the humility which becomes him, manifests both fear and reverence. Hence it is, that in the present day so many dogs tear this doctrine with envenomed teeth, or, at least, assail it with their bark, refusing to give more license to God than their own reason dictates to themselves. With what petulance, too, are we assailed for not being contented with the precepts of the Law, in which the will of God is comprehended, and for maintaining that the world is governed by his secret counsels? As if our doctrine were the figment of our own brain, and were not distinctly declared by the Spirit, and repeated in innumerable forms of expression! Since some feeling of shame restrains them from daring to belch forth their blasphemies against heaven, that they may give the freer vent to their rage, they pretend to pick a quarrel with us. But if they refuse to admit that every event which happens in the world is governed by the incomprehensible counsel of God, let them explain to what effect Scripture declares, that



“his judgments are a great deep,” (Ps. xxxvi. 7.) For when Moses exclaims that the will of God “is not in heaven that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us? Neither is it beyond the sea that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea and bring it unto us?” (Deut. xxx. 12, 13,) because it was familiarly expounded in the law, it follows that there must be another hidden will which is compared to “a great deep.” It is of this will Paul exclaims, “O! the depths of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counsellor?” (Rom. xi. 33, 34.) It is true, indeed, that in the law and the gospel are comprehended mysteries which far transcend the measure of our sense; but since God, to enable his people to understand those mysteries which he has deigned to reveal in his word, enlightens their minds with a spirit of understanding, they are now no longer a deep, but a path in which they can walk safely—a lamp to guide their feet—a light of life—a school of clear and certain truth. But the admirable method of governing the world is justly called a deep, because, while it lies hid from us, it is to be reverently adored. Both views Moses has beautifully expressed in a few words. “Secret things,” saith he, “belong unto the Lord our God, but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever,” (Deut. xxix. 29.) We see how he enjoins us not only studiously to meditate on the law, but to look up with reverence to the secret Providence of God. The Book of Job also, in order to keep our minds humble, contains a description of this lofty theme. The author of the Book, after taking an ample survey of the universe, and discoursing magnificently on the works of God, at length adds, “Lo, these are parts of his ways: but how little a portion is heard of him?” (Job xxvi. 14.) For which reason he, in another passage, distinguishes between the wisdom which dwells in God, and the measure of wisdom which he has assigned to man, (Job xxviii. 21, 28.) After discoursing of the secrets of nature, he says that wisdom “is hid from the eyes of all living;” that “God under-



standeth the way thereof." Shortly after he adds, that it has been divulged that it might be investigated; for "unto man he said, Behold the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom." To this the words of Augustine refer, "As we do not know all the things which God does respecting us in the best order, we ought, with good intention, to act according to the Law, and in some things be acted upon according to the Law, his Providence being a Law immutable," (August. Quæst. Lib. lxxxiii. c. 27.) Therefore, since God claims to himself the right of governing the world, a right unknown to us, let it be our law of modesty and soberness to acquiesce in his supreme authority, regarding his will as our only rule of justice, and the most perfect cause of all things,—not that absolute will, indeed, of which sophists prate, when by a profane and impious divorce, they separate his justice from his power, but that universal overruling Providence from which nothing flows that is not right, though the reasons thereof may be concealed.<sup>1</sup>

3. Those who have learned this modesty will neither murmur against God for adversity in time past, nor charge him with the blame of their own wickedness, as Homer's Agamemnon does.—'Εγω δ' οὐκ αἰτίος εἰμι, ἀλλὰ Ζεὺς καὶ μοῖρα. "*Blame not me, but Jupiter and fate.*" On the other hand, they will not, like the youth in Plautus, destroy themselves in despair, as if hurried away by the Fates. "Unstable is the condition of affairs; instead of doing as they list, men only fulfil their fate: I will hie me to a rock, and there end my fortune with my life." Nor will they, after the example of another, use the name of God as a cloak for their crimes. For in another comedy Lyconides thus expresses himself:—"God was the impeller: I believe the gods wished it. Did they not wish it, it would not be done, I know." They will rather inquire and learn from Scripture what is pleasing to God, and then, under the guidance of the Spirit, endeavour to attain it. Prepared to follow whithersoever God may call, they will show by their

<sup>1</sup> See Salvian. in Tract. de Vero Judicio et Providentia Dei. Also Bernard. De Interiore Domo, cap. 25. Also Luther in Epist. ad Fratres Antwerpienses.

example that nothing is more useful than the knowledge of this doctrine, which perverse men undeservedly assail, because it is sometimes wickedly abused. The profane make such a bluster with their foolish puerilities, that they almost, according to the expression, confound heaven and earth. If the Lord has marked the moment of our death, it cannot be escaped,—it is vain to toil and use precaution. Therefore, when one ventures not to travel on a road which he hears is infested by robbers; when another calls in the physician, and annoys himself with drugs, for the sake of his health; a third abstains from coarser food, that he may not injure a sickly constitution; and a fourth fears to dwell in a ruinous house; when all, in short, devise, and, with great eagerness of mind, strike out paths by which they may attain the objects of their desire; either these are all vain remedies, laid hold of to correct the will of God, or his certain decree does not fix the limits of life and death, health and sickness, peace and war, and other matters which men, according as they desire and hate, study by their own industry to secure or avoid. Nay, these trifles even infer, that the prayers of the faithful must be perverse, not to say superfluous, since they entreat the Lord to make a provision for things which he has decreed from eternity. And then, imputing whatever happens to the providence of God, they connive at the man who is known to have expressly designed it. Has an assassin slain an honest citizen? He has, say they, executed the counsel of God. Has some one committed theft or adultery? The deed having been provided and ordained by the Lord, he is the minister of his providence. Has a son waited with indifference for the death of his parent, without trying any remedy? He could not oppose God, who had so predetermined from eternity. Thus all crimes receive the name of virtues, as being in accordance with divine ordination.

4. As regards future events, Solomon easily reconciles human deliberation with divine providence. For while he derides the stupidity of those who presume to undertake anything without God, as if they were not ruled by his hand, he elsewhere thus expresses himself: “A man’s heart deviseth his way, but the Lord directeth his steps,”

(Prov. xvi. 9;) intimating, that the eternal decrees of God by no means prevent us from proceeding, under his will, to provide for ourselves, and arrange all our affairs. And the reason for this is clear. For he who has fixed the boundaries of our life, has at the same time entrusted us with the care of it, provided us with the means of preserving it, forewarned us of the dangers to which we are exposed, and supplied cautions and remedies, that we may not be overwhelmed unawares. Now, our duty is clear, namely, since the Lord has committed to us the defence of our life,—to defend it; since he offers assistance,—to use it; since he forewarns us of danger,—not to rush on heedless; since he supplies remedies,—not to neglect them. But it is said, a danger that is not fatal will not hurt us, and one that is fatal cannot be resisted by any precaution. But what if dangers are not fatal, merely because the Lord has furnished you with the means of warding them off, and surmounting them? See how far your reasoning accords with the order of divine procedure: You infer that danger is not to be guarded against, because, if it is not fatal, you shall escape without precaution; whereas the Lord enjoins you to guard against it, just because he wills it not to be fatal.<sup>1</sup> These insane cavillers overlook what is plainly before their eyes, viz., that the Lord has furnished men with the arts of deliberation and caution, that they may employ them in subservience to his providence, in the preservation of their life; while, on the contrary, by neglect and sloth, they bring upon themselves the evils which he has annexed to them. How comes it that a provident man, while he consults for his safety, disentangles himself from impending evils; while a foolish man, through unadvised temerity, perishes, unless it be that prudence and folly are, in either case, instruments of divine dispensation? God has been pleased to conceal from us all future events that we may prepare for them as doubtful, and cease not to apply the provided remedies until they have either been overcome, or have proved too much for all our

<sup>1</sup> Cic. de Fato. "Recte Chrysippus, tam futile est medicum adhibere, quam convalescere."—See Luther on Genesis xxx. 7, against those who thus abuse the doctrine of Predestination.



care. Hence, I formerly observed, that the Providence of God does not interpose simply ; but, by employing means, assumes, as it were, a visible form.

5. By the same class of persons, past events are referred improperly and inconsiderately to simple providence. As all contingencies whatsoever depend on it, therefore, neither thefts nor adulteries, nor murders, are perpetrated without an interposition of the divine will. Why, then, they ask, should the thief be punished for robbing him whom the Lord chose to chastise with poverty? Why should the murderer be punished for slaying him whose life the Lord had terminated? If all such persons serve the will of God, why should they be punished? I deny that they serve the will of God. For we cannot say that he who is carried away by a wicked mind performs service on the order of God, when he is only following his own malignant desires. He obeys God, who, being instructed in his will, hastens in the direction in which God calls him. But how are we so instructed unless by his word? The will declared by his word is, therefore, that which we must keep in view in acting. God requires of us nothing but what he enjoins. If we design any thing contrary to his precept, it is not obedience, but contumacy and transgression. But if he did not will it, we could not do it. I admit this. But do we act wickedly for the purpose of yielding obedience to him? This, assuredly, he does not command. Nay, rather we rush on, not thinking of what he wishes, but so inflamed by our own passionate lust, that, with destined purpose, we strive against him. And in this way, while acting wickedly, we serve his righteous ordination, since in his boundless wisdom he well knows how to use bad instruments for good purposes. And see how absurd this mode of arguing is. They will have it that crimes ought not to be punished in their authors, because they are not committed without the dispensation of God. I concede more—that thieves and murderers, and other evil-doers, are instruments of Divine Providence, being employed by the Lord himself to execute the judgments which he has resolved to inflict. But I deny that this forms any excuse for their misdeeds.



For how? Will they implicate God in the same iniquity with themselves, or will they cloak their depravity by his righteousness? They cannot exculpate themselves, for their own conscience condemns them: they cannot charge God, since they perceive the whole wickedness in themselves, and nothing in Him save the legitimate use of their wickedness. But it is said he works by their means. And whence, I pray, the fœtid odour of a dead body, which has been uncoffined and putrified by the sun's heat? All see that it is excited by the rays of the sun, but no man therefore says that the fœtid odour is in them. In the same way, while the matter and guilt of wickedness belongs to the wicked man, why should it be thought that God contracts any impurity in using it at pleasure as his instrument? Have done, then, with that dog-like petulance which may, indeed, bay from a distance at the justice of God, but cannot reach it!

6. These calumnies, or rather frenzied dreams, will easily be dispelled by a pure and holy meditation on Divine Providence, meditation such as piety enjoins, that we may thence derive the best and sweetest fruit. The Christian, then, being most fully persuaded, that all things come to pass by the dispensation of God, and that nothing happens fortuitously, will always direct his eye to him as the principal cause of events, at the same time paying due regard to inferior causes in their own place. Next, he will have no doubt that a special providence is awake for his preservation, and will not suffer anything to happen that will not turn to his good and safety. But as its business is first with men and then with the other creatures, he will feel assured that the providence of God reigns over both. In regard to men, good as well as bad, he will acknowledge that their counsels, wishes, aims, and faculties, are so under his hand, that he has full power to turn them in whatever direction, and constrain them as often as he pleases. The fact that a special providence watches over the safety of believers, is attested by a vast number of the clearest promises.<sup>1</sup> “Cast

<sup>1</sup> Ps. lv. 23; 1 Pet. v. 7; Ps. xci. 1; Zech. ii. 8; Isaiah xxvi. 1; xxix. 15.

thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved." "Casting all your care upon him: for he careth for you." "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." "He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of mine eye." "We have a strong city: salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks." "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee." Nay, the chief aim of the historical books of Scripture is to show that the ways of his saints are so carefully guarded by the Lord, as to prevent them even from dashing their foot against a stone. Therefore, as we a little ago justly exploded the opinion of those who feign a universal providence, which does not condescend to take special care of every creature, so it is of the highest moment that we should specially recognise this care towards ourselves. Hence, our Saviour, after declaring that even a sparrow falls not to the ground without the will of his Father, immediately makes the application, that being more valuable than many sparrows, we ought to consider that God provides more carefully for us. He even extends this so far, as to assure us that the hairs of our head are all numbered. What more can we wish, if not even a hair of our head can fall, save in accordance with his will? I speak not merely of the human race in general. God having chosen the Church for his abode, there cannot be a doubt, that in governing it, he gives singular manifestations of his paternal care.

7. The servant of God being confirmed by these promises and examples, will add the passages which teach that all men are under his power, whether to conciliate their minds, or to curb their wickedness, and prevent it from doing harm. For it is the Lord who gives us favour, not only with those who wish us well, but also in the eyes of the Egyptians, (Exod. iii. 21,) in various ways defeating the malice of our enemies. Sometimes he deprives them of all presence of mind, so that they cannot undertake anything soundly or soberly. In this way, he sends Satan to be a lie in the mouths of all the prophets in order to deceive Ahab,

(1 Kings xxii. 22,) by the counsel of the young men he so infatuates Rehoboam, that his folly deprives him of his kingdom, (1 Kings xii. 10, 15.) Sometimes when he leaves them in possession of intellect, he so fills them with terror and dismay, that they can neither will nor plan the execution of what they had designed. Sometimes, too, after permitting them to attempt what lust and rage suggested, he opportunely interrupts them in their career, and allows them not to conclude what they had begun. Thus the counsel of Ahithophel, which would have been fatal to David, was defeated before its time, (2 Sam. xvii. 7, 14.) Thus, for the good and safety of his people, he overrules all the creatures, even the devil himself, who, we see, durst not attempt any thing against Job without his permission and command. This knowledge is necessarily followed by gratitude in prosperity, patience in adversity, and incredible security for the time to come. Every thing, therefore, which turns out prosperous and according to his wish, the Christian will ascribe entirely to God, whether he has experienced his beneficence through the instrumentality of men, or been aided by inanimate creatures. For he will thus consider with himself: Certainly it was the Lord that disposed the minds of these people in my favour, attaching them to me so as to make them the instruments of his kindness. In an abundant harvest he will think that it is the Lord who listens to the heaven, that the heaven may listen to the earth, and the earth herself to her own offspring; in other cases, he will have no doubt that he owes all his prosperity to the divine blessing, and, admonished by so many circumstances, will feel it impossible to be ungrateful.

8. If any thing adverse befalls him, he will forthwith raise his mind to God, whose hand is most effectual in impressing us with patience and placid moderation of mind. Had Joseph kept his thoughts fixed on the treachery of his brethren, he never could have resumed fraternal affection for them. But turning toward the Lord, he forgot the injury, and was so inclined to mildness and mercy, that he even voluntarily comforts his brethren, telling them, "Be not grieved nor angry with yourselves that ye sold me hither;



for God did send me before you to preserve life." "As for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good," (Gen. xlv. 5; l. 20.) Had Job turned to the Chaldees, by whom he was plundered, he should instantly have been fired with revenge, but recognising the work of the Lord, he solaces himself with this most beautiful sentiment: "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord," (Job i. 21.) So when David was assailed by Shimei with stones and curses, had he immediately fixed his eyes on the man, he would have urged his people to retaliate the injury; but perceiving that he acts not without an impulse from the Lord, he rather calms them. "So let him curse," says he, "because the Lord hath said unto him, Curse David." With the same bridle he elsewhere curbs the excess of his grief, "I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, because thou didst it," (Ps. xxxix. 9.) If there is no more effectual remedy for anger and impatience, he assuredly has not made little progress who has learned so to meditate on Divine Providence, as to be able always to bring his mind to this, The Lord willed it, it must therefore be borne; not only because it is unlawful to strive with him, but because he wills nothing that is not just and befitting. The whole comes to this. When unjustly assailed by men, overlooking their malice, (which could only aggravate our grief, and whet our minds for vengeance,) let us remember to ascend to God, and learn to hold it for certain, that whatever an enemy wickedly committed against us was permitted, and sent by his righteous dispensation. Paul, in order to suppress our desire to retaliate injuries, wisely reminds us that we wrestle not with flesh and blood, but with our spiritual enemy the devil, that we may prepare for the contest, (Eph. vi. 12.) But to calm all the impulses of passion, the most useful consideration is, that God arms the devil, as well as all the wicked, for conflict, and sits as umpire, that he may exercise our patience. But if the disasters and miseries which press us happen without the agency of men, let us call to mind the doctrine of the Law, (Deut. xxviii. 1,) that all prosperity has its source in the blessing of God, that all adversity is his



curse. And let us tremble at the dreadful denunciation, "And if ye will not be reformed by these things, but will walk contrary unto me; then will I also walk contrary unto you," (Lev. xxvi. 23, 24.) These words condemn our torpor, when, according to our carnal sense, deeming that whatever happens in any way is fortuitous, we are neither animated by the kindness of God to worship him, nor by his scourge stimulated to repentance. And it is for this reason that Jeremiah, (Lament. iii. 38,) and Amos, (Amos iii. 6,) expostulated bitterly with the Jews, for not believing that good as well as evil was produced by the command of God. To the same effect are the words in Isaiah, "I form the light and create darkness: I make peace and create evil. I the Lord do all these things," (Is. xlv. 7.)

9. At the same time, the Christian will not overlook inferior causes. For, while he regards those by whom he is benefited as ministers of the divine goodness, he will not, therefore, pass them by, as if their kindness deserved no gratitude, but feeling sincerely obliged to them, will willingly confess the obligation, and endeavour, according to his ability, to return it. In fine, in the blessings which he receives, he will revere and extol God as the principal author, but will also honour men as his ministers, and perceive, as is the truth, that by the will of God he is under obligation to those, by whose hand God has been pleased to show him kindness. If he sustains any loss through negligence or imprudence, he will, indeed, believe that it was the Lord's will it should so be, but, at the same time, he will impute it to himself. If one for whom it was his duty to care, but whom he has treated with neglect, is carried off by disease, although aware that the person had reached a limit beyond which it was impossible to pass, he will not, therefore, extenuate his fault, but, as he had neglected to do his duty faithfully towards him, will feel as if he had perished by his guilty negligence. Far less where, in the case of theft or murder, fraud and preconceived malice have existed, will he palliate it under the pretext of Divine Providence, but in the same crime will distinctly recognise the justice of God, and the iniquity of man, as each is separately manifested. But in future events, espe-

cially, will he take account of such inferior causes. If he is not left destitute of human aid, which he can employ for his safety, he will set it down as a divine blessing; but he will not, therefore, be remiss in taking measures, or slow in employing the help of those whom he sees possessed of the means of assisting him. Regarding all the aids which the creatures can lend him, as hands offered him by the Lord, he will avail himself of them as the legitimate instruments of Divine Providence. And as he is uncertain what the result of any business in which he engages is to be, (save that he knows, that in all things the Lord will provide for his good,) he will zealously aim at what he deems for the best, so far as his abilities enable him. In adopting his measures, he will not be carried away by his own impressions, but will commit and resign himself to the wisdom of God, that under his guidance he may be led into the right path. However, his confidence in external aid will not be such that the presence of it will make him feel secure, the absence of it fill him with dismay, as if he were destitute. His mind will always be fixed on the Providence of God alone, and no consideration of present circumstances will be allowed to withdraw him from the steady contemplation of it. Thus Joab, while he acknowledges that the issue of the battle is entirely in the hand of God, does not therefore become inactive, but strenuously proceeds with what belongs to his proper calling, "Be of good courage," says he, "and let us play the men for our people, and for the cities of our God; and the Lord do that which seemeth him good," (2 Sam. x. 12.) The same conviction keeping us free from rashness and false confidence, will stimulate us to constant prayer, while at the same time filling our minds with good hope, it will enable us to feel secure, and bid defiance to all the dangers by which we are surrounded.

10. Here we are forcibly reminded of the inestimable felicity of a pious mind. Innumerable are the ills which beset human life, and present death in as many different forms. Not to go beyond ourselves, since the body is a receptacle, nay the nurse, of a thousand diseases, a man cannot move without carrying along with him many forms of destruction. His

life is in a manner interwoven with death. For what else can be said where heat and cold bring equal danger? Then, in what direction soever you turn, all surrounding objects not only may do harm, but almost openly threaten and seem to present immediate death. Go on board a ship, you are but a plank's breadth from death. Mount a horse, the stumbling of a foot endangers your life. Walk along the streets, every tile upon the roofs is a source of danger. If a sharp instrument is in your own hand, or that of a friend, the possible harm is manifest. All the savage beasts you see are so many beings armed for your destruction. Even within a high walled garden, where everything ministers to delight, a serpent will sometimes lurk. Your house, constantly exposed to fire, threatens you with poverty by day, with destruction by night. Your fields, subject to hail, mildew, drought, and other injuries, denounce barrenness, and thereby famine. I say nothing of poison, treachery, robbery, some of which beset us at home, others follow us abroad. Amid these perils, must not man be very miserable, as one who, more dead than alive, with difficulty draws an anxious and feeble breath, just as if a drawn sword were constantly suspended over his neck? It may be said that these things happen seldom, at least not always, or to all, certainly never all at once. I admit it; but since we are reminded by the example of others, that they may also happen to us, and that our life is not an exception any more than theirs, it is impossible not to fear and dread as if they were to befall us. What can you imagine more grievous than such trepidation? Add that there is something like an insult to God when it is said, that man, the noblest of the creatures, stands exposed to every blind and random stroke of fortune. Here, however, we were only referring to the misery which man should feel, were he placed under the dominion of chance.

11. But when once the light of Divine Providence has illumined the believer's soul, he is relieved and set free, not only from the extreme fear and anxiety which formerly oppressed him, but from all care. For as he justly shudders at the idea of chance, so he can confidently commit





himself to God. This, I say, is his comfort, that his heavenly Father so embraces all things under his power—so governs them at will by his nod—so regulates them by his wisdom, that nothing takes place save according to his appointment; that received into his favour, and entrusted to the care of his angels, neither fire, nor water, nor sword, can do him harm, except in so far as God their master is pleased to permit. For thus sings the Psalm, “Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust; his truth shall be thy shield and buckler. Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday,” &c. (Ps. xci. 2–6.) Hence the exulting confidence of the saints, “The Lord is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me? The Lord taketh my part with them that help me.” “Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear.” “Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil.” (Ps. cxviii. 6; xxvii. 3; xxiii. 4.)

How comes it, I ask, that their confidence never fails, but just that while the world apparently revolves at random, they know that God is every where at work, and feel assured that his work will be their safety? When assailed by the devil and wicked men, were they not confirmed by remembering and meditating on Providence, they should, of necessity, forthwith despond. But when they call to mind that the devil, and the whole train of the ungodly, are, in all directions, held in by the hand of God as with a bridle, so that they can neither conceive any mischief, nor plan what they have conceived, nor how much soever they may have planned, move a single finger to perpetrate, unless in so far as he permits, nay, unless in so far as he commands; that they are not only bound by his fetters, but are even forced to do him service,—when the godly think of all these things they have ample sources of consolation. For, as it belongs to the Lord to arm the fury of such foes, and turn and destine it



at pleasure, so it is his also to determine the measure and the end, so as to prevent them from breaking loose and wantoning as they list. Supported by this conviction, Paul, who had said in one place that his journey was hindered by Satan, (1 Thess. ii. 18,) in another resolves, with the permission of God, to undertake it, (1 Cor. xvi. 7.) If he had only said that Satan was the obstacle, he might have seemed to give him too much power, as if he were able even to overturn the counsels of God; but now, when he makes God the disposer, on whose permission all journies depend, he shows, that however Satan may contrive, he can accomplish nothing except in so far as He pleases to give the word. For the same reason, David, considering the various turns which human life undergoes as it rolls, and in a manner whirls around, betakes himself to this asylum, "My times are in thy hand," (Ps. xxxi. 15.) He might have said the course of life or *time* in the singular number, but by *times* he meant to express, that how unstable soever the condition of man may be, the vicissitudes which are ever and anon taking place are under divine regulation. Hence Rezin and the king of Israel, after they had joined their forces for the destruction of Israel, and seemed torches which had been kindled to destroy and consume the land, are termed by the prophet "smoking firebrands." They could only emit a little smoke, (Is. vii. 4.) So Pharaoh, when he was an object of dread to all by his wealth and strength, and the multitude of his troops, is compared to the largest of beasts, while his troops are compared to fishes; and God declares that he will take both leader and army with his hooks, and drag them whither he pleases, (Exod. xxix. 4.) In one word, not to dwell longer on this, give heed, and you will at once perceive that ignorance of Providence is the greatest of all miseries, and the knowledge of it the highest happiness.

12. On the Providence of God, in so far as conducive to the solid instruction and consolation of believers, (for, as to satisfying the curiosity of foolish men, it is a thing which cannot be done, and ought not to be attempted,) enough would have been said, did not a few passages remain which seem

to insinuate, contrary to the view which we have expounded, that the counsel of God is not firm and stable, but varies with the changes of sublunary affairs. First, in reference to the Providence of God, it is said that he repented of having made man, (Gen. vi. 6,) and of having raised Saul to the kingdom, (1 Sam. xv. 11,) and that he will repent of the evil which he had resolved to inflict on his people as soon as he shall have perceived some amendment in them, (Jer. xviii. 8.) Secondly, his decrees are sometimes said to be annulled. He had by Jonah proclaimed to the Ninevites, "Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown," but, immediately on their repentance, he inclined to a more merciful sentence, (Jonah iii. 4-10.) After he had, by the mouth of Isaiah, given Hezekiah intimation of his death, he was moved by his tears and prayers to defer it, (Is. xxxviii. 15; 2 Kings xx. 15.) Hence many argue that God has not fixed human affairs by an eternal decree, but according to the merits of each individual, and as he deems right and just, disposes of each single year, and day, and hour. As to repentance, we must hold that it can no more exist in God than ignorance, or error, or impotence. If no man knowingly or willingly reduces himself to the necessity of repentance, we cannot attribute repentance to God without saying either that he knows not what is to happen, or that he cannot evade it, or that he rushes precipitately and inconsiderately into a resolution, and then forthwith regrets it. But so far is this from the meaning of the Holy Spirit, that in the very mention of repentance he declares that God is not influenced by any feeling of regret, that he is not a man that he should repent. And it is to be observed, that, in the same chapter, both things are so conjoined, that a comparison of the passages admirably removes the appearance of contradiction. When it is said that God repented of having made Saul king, the term *change* is used figuratively. Shortly after, it is added, "The Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent; for he is not a man, that he should repent," (1 Sam. xv. 29.) In these words, his immutability is plainly asserted without figure. Wherefore it is certain that, in administering human affairs, the ordination of God is perpetual, and superior to every-

thing like repentance. That there might be no doubt of his constancy, even his enemies are forced to bear testimony to it. For Balaam, even against his will, behoved to break forth into this exclamation, "God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?" (Num. xxiii. 19.)

13. What then is meant by the term repentance? The very same that is meant by the other forms of expression, by which God is described to us humanly. Because our weakness cannot reach his height, any description which we receive of him must be lowered to our capacity in order to be intelligible. And the mode of lowering is to represent him not as he really is, but as we conceive of him. Though he is incapable of every feeling of perturbation, he declares that he is angry with the wicked. Wherefore, as when we hear that God is angry, we ought not to imagine that there is any emotion in him, but ought rather to consider the mode of speech accommodated to our sense, God appearing to us like one inflamed and irritated whenever he exercises judgment, so we ought not to imagine any thing more under the term repentance than a change of action, men being wont to testify their dissatisfaction by such a change. Hence, because every change whatever among men is intended as a correction of what displeases, and the correction proceeds from repentance, the same term applied to God simply means that his procedure is changed. In the meantime, there is no inversion of his counsel or will, no change of his affection. What from eternity he had foreseen, approved, decreed, he prosecutes with unvarying uniformity, how sudden soever to the eye of man the variation may seem to be.

14. Nor does the Sacred History, while it relates that the destruction which had been proclaimed to the Ninevites was remitted, and the life of Hezekiah, after an intimation of death, prolonged, imply that the decrees of God were annulled. Those who think so labour under delusion as to the meaning of *threatenings*, which, though they affirm simply, nevertheless contain in them a tacit condition dependent on the result. Why did the Lord send Jonah to the Nine-



vites to predict the overthrow of their city? Why did he by Isaiah give Hezekiah intimation of his death? He might have destroyed both them and him without a message to announce the disaster. He had something else in view than to give them a warning of death, which might let them see it at a distance before it came. It was because he did not wish them destroyed but reformed, and thereby saved from destruction. When Jonah prophesies that in forty days Nineveh will be overthrown, he does it in order to prevent the overthrow. When Hezekiah is forbidden to hope for longer life, it is that he may obtain longer life. Who does not now see that, by threatenings of this kind, God wished to arouse those to repentance whom he terrified, that they might escape the judgment which their sins deserved? If this is so, the very nature of the case obliges us to supply a tacit condition in a simple denunciation. This is even confirmed by analogous cases. The Lord rebuking King Abimelech for having carried off the wife of Abraham, uses these words: "Behold, thou art but a dead man, for the woman which thou hast taken; for she is a man's wife." But, after Abimelech's excuse, he thus speaks: "Restore the man his wife, for he is a prophet, and he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live; and if thou restore her not, know thou that thou shalt surely die, thou and all that art thine," (Gen. xx. 3, 7.) You see that, by the first announcement, he makes a deep impression on his mind, that he may render him eager to give satisfaction, and that by the second he clearly explains his will. Since the other passages may be similarly explained, you must not infer from them that the Lord derogated in any respect from his former counsel, because he recalled what he had promulgated. When, by denouncing punishment, he admonishes to repentance those whom he wishes to spare, he paves the way for his eternal decree, instead of varying it one whit either in will or in language. The only difference is, that he does not express, in so many syllables, what is easily understood. The words of Isaiah must remain true, "The Lord of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? And his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?" (Isaiah xiv. 27.)



## CHAPTER XVIII.

THE INSTRUMENTALITY OF THE WICKED EMPLOYED BY GOD,  
WHILE HE CONTINUES FREE FROM EVERY TAIN<sup>1</sup>.

This last chapter of the First Book consists of three parts : I. It having been said above that God bends all the reprobate, and even Satan himself, at his will, three objections are started. First, that this happens by the permission, not by the will of God. To this objection there is a twofold reply, the one, that angels and men, good and bad, do nothing but what is appointed by God ; the second, that all movements are secretly directed to their end by the hidden inspiration of God, sec. 1, 2. II. A second objection is, that there are two contrary wills in God, if by a secret counsel he decrees what he openly prohibits by his law. This objection refuted, sec. 3. III. The third objection is, that God is made the author of all wickedness, when he is said not only to use the agency of the wicked, but also to govern their counsels and affections, and that therefore the wicked are unjustly punished. This objection refuted in the last section.

*Sections.*

1. The carnal mind the source of the objections which are raised against the Providence of God. A primary objection, making a distinction between the *permission* and the *will* of God, refuted. Angels and men, good and bad, do nought but what has been decreed by God. This proved by examples.
2. All hidden movements directed to their end by the unseen but righteous instigation of God. Examples, with answers to objections.
3. These objections originate in a spirit of pride and blasphemy. Objection, that there must be two contrary wills in God, refuted. Why the one simple will of God seems to us as if it were manifold.
4. Objection, that God is the author of sin, refuted by examples. Augustine's answer and admonition.

1. FROM other passages, in which God is said to draw or bend Satan himself, and all the reprobate, to his will, a more difficult question arises. For the carnal mind can scarcely comprehend how, when acting by their means, he

<sup>1</sup> See Calvin, *adv. Libertinos*, cap. xv. xvi., and *Augustin. de Ordine*, Lib. i. and ii., where he admirably discusses the question, Whether the order of Divine Providence includes all good and evil ?

contracts no taint from their impurity, nay, how, in a common operation, he is exempt from all guilt, and can justly condemn his own ministers. Hence a distinction has been invented between *doing* and *permitting*, because to many it seemed altogether inexplicable how Satan and all the wicked are so under the hand and authority of God, that he directs their malice to whatever end he pleases, and employs their iniquities to execute his judgments. The modesty of those who are thus alarmed at the appearance of absurdity might perhaps be excused, did they not endeavour to vindicate the justice of God from every semblance of stigma by defending an untruth. It seems absurd that man should be blinded by the will and command of God, and yet be forthwith punished for his blindness. Hence, recourse is had to the evasion that this is done only by the permission, and not also by the will of God. He himself, however, openly declaring that he *does* this, repudiates the evasion. That men do nothing save at the secret instigation of God, and do not discuss and deliberate on any thing but what he has previously decreed with himself and brings to pass by his secret direction, is proved by numberless clear passages of Scripture. What we formerly quoted from the Psalms, to the effect that he does whatever pleases him, certainly extends to all the actions of men. If God is the arbiter of peace and war, as is there said, and that without any exception, who will venture to say that men are borne along at random with a blind impulse, while He is unconscious or quiescent? But the matter will be made clearer by special examples. From the first chapter of Job we learn that Satan appears in the presence of God to receive his orders, just as do the angels who obey spontaneously. The manner and the end are different, but still the fact is, that he cannot attempt anything without the will of God. But though afterwards his power to afflict the saint seems to be only a bare permission, yet as the sentiment is true, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; as it pleased the Lord, so it hath been done," we infer that God was the author of that trial of which Satan and wicked robbers were merely the instruments. Satan's aim is to drive the saint to madness by despair. The Sabeans cruelly and wickedly

make a sudden incursion to rob another of his goods. Job acknowledges that he was deprived of all his property, and brought to poverty, because such was the pleasure of God. Therefore, whatever men or Satan himself devise, God holds the helm, and makes all their efforts contribute to the execution of his judgments. God wills that the perfidious Ahab should be deceived; the devil offers his agency for that purpose, and is sent with a definite command to be a lying spirit in the mouth of all the prophets, (2 Kings xxii. 20.) If the blinding and infatuation of Ahab is a judgment from God, the fiction of bare permission is at an end; for it would be ridiculous for a judge only to permit, and not also to decree, what he wishes to be done at the very time that he commits the execution of it to his ministers. The Jews purposed to destroy Christ. Pilate and the soldiers indulged them in their fury; yet the disciples confess in solemn prayer that all the wicked did nothing but what the hand and counsel of God had decreed, (Acts iv. 28,) just as Peter had previously said in his discourse, that Christ was delivered to death by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, (Acts ii. 23;) in other words, that God, to whom all things are known from the beginning, had determined what the Jews had executed. He repeats the same thing elsewhere, "Those things, which God before had showed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled," (Acts iii. 18.) Absalom incestuously defiling his father's bed, perpetrates a detestable crime. God, however, declares that it was his work; for the words are, "Thou didst it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun."<sup>1</sup> The cruelties of the Chaldeans in Judea are declared by Jeremiah to be the work of God. For which reason, Nebuchadnezzar is called the servant of God. God frequently exclaims, that by his hiss, by the clang of his trumpet, by his authority and command, the wicked are excited to war. He calls the Assyrian the rod of his anger, and the axe which he wields in his hand. The overthrow of the city, and downfall of the temple, he calls his own work.

<sup>1</sup> 2 Sam. xii. 12; Jer. l. 25; Is. v. 26; x. 5; xix. 25; 2 Sam. xvi. 10; 1 Kings xi. 31; 1 Sam. ii. 34.



David, not murmuring against God, but acknowledging him to be a just judge, confesses that the curses of Shimei are uttered by his orders. "The Lord," says he, "has bidden him curse." Often in sacred history whatever happens is said to proceed from the Lord, as the revolt of the ten tribes, the death of Eli's sons, and very many others of a similar description. Those who have a tolerable acquaintance with the Scriptures see that, with a view to brevity, I am only producing a few out of many passages, from which it is perfectly clear that it is the merest trifling to substitute a bare permission for the providence of God, as if he sat in a watch-tower waiting for fortuitous events, his judgments meanwhile depending on the will of man.

2. With regard to secret movements, what Solomon says of the heart of a king, that it is turned hither and thither, as God sees meet, certainly applies to the whole human race, and has the same force as if he had said, that whatever we conceive in our minds is directed to its end by the secret inspiration of God. And certainly, did he not work internally in the minds of men, it could not have been properly said, that he takes away the lip from the true, and prudence from the aged—takes away the heart from the princes of the earth, that they wander through devious paths. To the same effect, we often read that men are intimidated when He fills their hearts with terror. Thus David left the camp of Saul while none knew of it, because a sleep from God had fallen upon all. But nothing can be clearer than the many passages which declare, that he blinds the minds of men, and smites them with giddiness, intoxicates them with a spirit of stupor, renders them infatuated, and hardens their hearts. Even these expressions many would confine to permission, as if, by deserting the reprobate, he allowed them to be blinded by Satan. But since the Holy Spirit distinctly says, that the blindness and infatuation are inflicted by the just judgment of God, the solution is altogether inadmissible. He is said to have hardened the heart of Pharaoh, to have hardened it yet more, and confirmed it. Some evade these forms of expression by a silly cavil, because Pharaoh is elsewhere said to have hardened his own heart, thus making his will



the cause of hardening it; as if the two things did not perfectly agree with each other, though in different senses, viz., that man, though acted upon by God, at the same time also acts. But I retort the objection on those who make it. If to harden means only bare permission, the contumacy will not properly belong to Pharaoh. Now, could any thing be more feeble and insipid than to interpret as if Pharaoh had only allowed himself to be hardened? We may add, that Scripture cuts off all handle for such cavils: "I," saith the Lord, "will harden his heart," (Exod. iv. 21.) So also, Moses says of the inhabitants of the land of Canaan, that they went forth to battle because the Lord had hardened their hearts, (Josh. xi. 20.) The same thing is repeated by another prophet, "He turned their hearts to hate his people," (Psalm cv. 25.) In like manner, in Isaiah, he says of the Assyrian, "I will send him against a hypocritical nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge to take the spoil, and to take the prey," (Isaiah x. 6;) not that he intends to teach wicked and obstinate man to obey spontaneously, but because he bends them to execute his judgments, just as if they carried their orders engraven on their minds. And hence it appears that they are impelled by the sure appointment of God. I admit, indeed, that God often acts in the reprobate by interposing the agency of Satan; but in such a manner, that Satan himself performs his part, just as he is impelled, and succeeds only in so far as he is permitted. The evil spirit that troubled Saul is said to be from the Lord, (1 Sam. xvi. 14,) to intimate that Saul's madness was a just punishment from God. Satan is also said to blind the minds of those who believe not, (2 Cor. iv. 4.) But how so, unless that a spirit of error is sent from God himself, making those who refuse to obey the truth to believe a lie? According to the former view, it is said, "If the prophet be deceived when he hath spoken a thing, I the Lord have deceived that prophet," (Ezek. xiv. 9.) According to the latter view, he is said to have given men over to a reprobate mind, (Rom. i. 28,) because he is the special author of his own just vengeance; whereas Satan is only his minister, (see Calv. in Ps. cxli. 4.) But as in the Second Book, (Chap. iv. sec. 3, 4),

in discussing the question of man's freedom, this subject will again be considered, the little that has now been said seems to be all that the occasion requires. The sum of the whole is this,—since the will of God is said to be the cause of all things, all the counsels and actions of men must be held to be governed by his providence; so that he not only exerts his power in the elect, who are guided by the Holy Spirit, but also forces the reprobate to do him service.

3. As I have hitherto stated only what is plainly and unambiguously taught in Scripture, those who hesitate not to stigmatise what is thus taught by the sacred oracles, had better beware what kind of censure they employ. If, under a pretence of ignorance, they seek the praise of modesty, what greater arrogance can be imagined than to utter one word in opposition to the authority of God—to say, for instance, “I think otherwise,”—“I would not have this subject touched?” But if they openly blaspheme, what will they gain by assaulting heaven? Such petulance, indeed, is not new. In all ages there have been wicked and profane men, who rabidly assailed this branch of doctrine. But what the Spirit declared of old by the mouth of David, (Ps. li. 6,) they will feel by experience to be true—God will overcome when he is judged. David indirectly rebukes the infatuation of those whose license is so unbridled, that from their grovelling spot of earth they not only plead against God, but arrogate to themselves the right of censuring him. At the same time, he briefly intimates that the blasphemies which they belch forth against heaven, instead of reaching God, only illustrate his justice, when the mists of their calumnies are dispersed. Even our faith, because founded on the sacred word of God, is superior to the whole world, and is able from its height to look down upon such mists.

Their first objection—that if nothing happens without the will of God, he must have two contrary wills, decreeing by a secret counsel what he has openly forbidden in his law—is easily disposed of. But before I reply to it, I would again remind my readers, that this cavil is directed not against me, but against the Holy Spirit, who certainly dictated this confession to that holy man Job, “The Lord gave, and the

Lord hath taken away," when, after being plundered by robbers, he acknowledges that their injustice and mischief was a just chastisement from God. And what says the Scripture elsewhere? The sons of Eli "hearkened not unto the voice of their father, because the Lord would slay them," (1 Sam. ii. 25.) Another prophet also exclaims, "Our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased," (Ps. cxv. 3.) I have already shown clearly enough that God is the author of all those things which, according to these objectors, happen only by his inactive permission. He testifies that he creates light and darkness, forms good and evil, (Is. xlv. 7;) that no evil happens which he hath not done, (Amos iii. 6.) Let them tell me whether God exercises his judgments willingly or unwillingly. As Moses teaches that he who is accidentally killed by the blow of an axe, is delivered by God into the hand of him who smites him, (Deut. xix. 5,) so the Gospel, by the mouth of Luke, declares, that Herod and Pontius Pilate conspired "to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done," (Acts iv. 28.) And, in truth, if Christ was not crucified by the will of God, where is our redemption? Still, however, the will of God is not at variance with itself. It undergoes no change. He makes no pretence of not willing what he wills, but while in himself the will is one and undivided, to us it appears manifold, because, from the feebleness of our intellect, we cannot comprehend how, though after a different manner, he wills and wills not the very same thing. Paul terms the calling of the Gentiles a hidden mystery, and shortly after adds, that therein was manifested the manifold wisdom of God, (Eph. iii. 10.) Since, on account of the dulness of our sense, the wisdom of God seems manifold, (or, as an old interpreter rendered it, multi-form,) are we, therefore, to dream of some variation in God, as if he either changed his counsel, or disagreed with himself? Nay, when we cannot comprehend how God can will that to be done which he forbids us to do, let us call to mind our imbecility, and remember that the light in which he dwells is not without cause termed inaccessible, (1 Tim. vi. 16,) because shrouded in darkness. Hence, all pious and modest



men will readily acquiesce in the sentiment of Augustine : “Man sometimes with a good will wishes something which God does not will, as when a good son wishes his father to live, while God wills him to die. Again, it may happen that man with a bad will wishes what God wills righteously, as when a bad son wishes his father to die, and God also wills it. The former wishes what God wills not, the latter wishes what God also wills. And yet the filial affection of the former is more consonant to the good will of God, though willing differently, than the unnatural affection of the latter, though willing the same thing ; so much does approbation or condemnation depend on what it is befitting in man, and what in God to will, and to what end the will of each has respect. For the things which God rightly wills, he accomplishes by the evil wills of bad men,”—(*August. Enchirid. ad Laurent. cap. 101.*) He had said a little before, (*cap. 100.*) that the apostate angels, by their revolt, and all the reprobate, as far as they themselves were concerned, did what God willed not ; but, in regard to his omnipotence, it was impossible for them to do so : for, while they act against the will of God, his will is accomplished in them. Hence he exclaims, “Great is the work of God, exquisite in all he wills ! so that, in a manner wondrous and ineffable, that is not done without his will which is done contrary to it, because it could not be done if he did not permit ; nor does he permit it unwillingly, but willingly ; nor would He who is good permit evil to be done, were he not omnipotent to bring good out of evil,” (*Augustin. in Ps. cxi. 2.*)

4. In the same way is solved, or rather spontaneously vanishes, another objection, viz., If God not only uses the agency of the wicked, but also governs their counsels and affections, he is the author of all their sins ; and, therefore, men, in executing what God has decreed, are unjustly condemned, because they are obeying his will. Here *will* is improperly confounded with *precept*, though it is obvious, from innumerable examples, that there is the greatest difference between them.<sup>1</sup> When Absalom defiled his father's bed,

<sup>1</sup> The French is, “Car ils meslent perversement le commandement de Dieu avec son vouloir secret, veu qu'il appert par exemples infinis



though God was pleased thus to avenge the adultery of David, he did not therefore enjoin an abandoned son to commit incest, unless, perhaps, in respect of David, as David himself says of Shimei's curses. For, while he confesses that Shimei acts by the order of God, he by no means commends the obedience, as if that petulant dog had been yielding obedience to a divine command; but, recognising in his tongue the scourge of God, he submits patiently to be chastised. Thus we must hold, that while by means of the wicked God performs what he had secretly decreed, they are not excusable as if they were obeying his precept, which of set purpose they violate according to their lust.

How these things, which men do perversely, are of God, and are ruled by his secret providence, is strikingly shown in the election of King Jeroboam, (1 Kings xii. 20,) in which the rashness and infatuation of the people are severely condemned for perverting the order sanctioned by God, and perfidiously revolting from the family of David. And yet we know it was God's will that Jeroboam should be anointed. Hence the apparent contradiction in the words of Hosea, (Hosea viii. 4; xiii. 11,) because, while God complained that that kingdom was erected without his knowledge, and against his will, he elsewhere declares, that he had given King Jeroboam in his anger. How shall we reconcile the two things,—that Jeroboam's reign was not of God, and yet God appointed him king? In this way: The people could not revolt from the family of David without shaking off a yoke divinely imposed on them, and yet God himself was not deprived of the power of thus punishing the ingratitude of Solomon. We, therefore, see how God, while not willing treachery, with another view justly wills the revolt; and hence Jeroboam, by unexpectedly receiving the sacred unction, is urged to aspire to the kingdom. For this reason, the sacred history says, that God stirred up an enemy to deprive the son of Solomon of part

qu'il y a bien longue distance et diversité de l'un à l'autre;" for they perversely confound the command of God with his secret will, though it appears, by an infinite number of examples, that there is a great distance and diversity between them.

of the kingdom, (1 Kings xi. 23.) Let the reader diligently ponder both points: how, as it was the will of God that the people should be ruled by the hand of one king, their being rent into two parties was contrary to his will; and yet how this same will originated the revolt. For certainly, when Jeroboam, who had no such thought, is urged by the prophet verbally, and by the oil of unction, to hope for the kingdom, the thing was not done without the knowledge or against the will of God, who had expressly commanded it; and yet the rebellion of the people is justly condemned, because it was against the will of God that they revolted from the posterity of David. For this reason, it is afterwards added, that when Rehoboam haughtily spurned the prayers of the people, "the cause was from the Lord, that he might perform his saying, which the Lord spake by Ahijah," (1 Kings xii. 15.) See how sacred unity was violated against the will of God, while, at the same time, with his will the ten tribes were alienated from the son of Solomon. To this might be added another similar example, viz., the murder of the sons of Ahab, and the extermination of his whole progeny by the consent, or rather the active agency, of the people. Jehu says truly, "There shall fall unto the earth nothing of the word of the Lord, which the Lord spake concerning the house of Ahab: for the Lord hath done that which he spake by his servant Elijah," (2 Kings x. 10.) And yet, with good reason, he upbraids the citizens of Samaria for having lent their assistance. "Ye be righteous: behold, I conspired against my master, and slew him, but who slew all these?"

If I mistake not, I have already shown clearly how the same act at once betrays the guilt of man, and manifests the righteousness of God. Modest minds will always be satisfied with Augustine's answer, "Since the Father delivered up the Son, Christ his own body, and Judas his Master, how in such a case is God just, and man guilty, but just because in the one act which they did, the reasons for which they did it are different?" (*August. Ep.* 48, *ad Vincentium.*) If any are not perfectly satisfied with this explanation, viz., that there is no concurrence between

God and man, when by His righteous impulse man does what he ought not to do, let them give heed to what Augustine elsewhere observes: "Who can refrain from trembling at those judgments when God does according to his pleasure even in the hearts of the wicked, at the same time rendering to them according to their deeds?" (*De Grat. et Lib. Arbit. ad Valent.* c. 20.) And certainly, in regard to the treachery of Judas, there is just as little ground to throw the blame of the crime upon God, because He was both pleased that his Son should be delivered up to death, and did deliver him, as to ascribe to Judas the praise of our redemption. Hence Augustine, in another place, truly observes, that when God makes his scrutiny, he looks not to what men could do, or to what they did, but to what they wished to do, thus taking account of their will and purpose. Those to whom this seems harsh had better consider how far their captiousness is entitled to any toleration, while, on the ground of its exceeding their capacity, they reject a matter which is clearly taught by Scripture, and complain of the enunciation of truths, which, if they were not useful to be known, God never would have ordered his prophets and apostles to teach. Our true wisdom is to embrace with meek docility, and without reservation, whatever the Holy Scriptures have delivered. Those who indulge their petulance, a petulance manifestly directed against God, are undeserving of a longer refutation.

END OF THE FIRST BOOK.

Questionable statement (1st) God created, and

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Other gods, although explanation of God's  
power, commands for individual instructions



INSTITUTES  
OF  
THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

BOOK SECOND.

OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD THE REDEEMER,  
IN CHRIST, AS FIRST MANIFESTED  
TO THE FATHERS, UNDER THE LAW, AND  
THEREAFTER TO US UNDER THE GOSPEL.

## SUBJECT.

THE First Part of the Apostles' Creed, viz., the knowledge of God the Creator, being disposed of, we now come to the Second Part, which relates to the knowledge of God as a Redeemer in Christ. The subjects treated of accordingly are, *first*, the Occasion of Redemption, viz., Adam's fall; and, *secondly*, Redemption itself. The first five chapters are devoted to the former subject, and the remainder to the latter.

Under the Occasion of Redemption, the Fall is considered not only in a general way, but also specially in its effects. Hence the first four chapters treat of original sin, free will, the corruption of human nature, and the operation of God in the heart. The fifth chapter contains a refutation of the arguments usually urged in support of free will.

The subject of redemption may be reduced to five particular heads:

I. The character of him in whom salvation for lost man must be sought, Chap. VI.

II. How he was manifested to the world, namely, in a twofold manner. First, under the Law. Here the Decalogue is expounded, and some other points relating to the law discussed, Chap. VII. and VIII. Secondly, under the Gospel. Here the resemblance and difference of the two dispensations are considered, Chap. IX. X. XI.

III. What kind of person Christ was, and behaved to be, in order to perform the office of Mediator, viz., God and man in one person, Chap. XII. XIII. XIV.

IV. For what end he was sent into the world by the Father. Here Christ's prophetic, kingly, and priestly offices are considered, Chap. XV.

V. In what way, or by what successive steps, Christ fulfilled the office of our Redeemer, Chap. XVI. Here are considered his crucifixion, death, burial, descent to hell, resurrection, ascension to heaven, and seat at the right hand of the Father, together with the practical use of the whole doctrine. Chapter XVII. contains an answer to the question, Whether Christ is properly said to have merited the grace of God for us.

# INSTITUTES

OF

## THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

### BOOK SECOND.

OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD THE REDEEMER,  
IN CHRIST, AS FIRST MANIFESTED TO THE FATHERS,  
UNDER THE LAW, AND THEREAFTER TO  
US UNDER THE GOSPEL.

### CHAPTER I.

THROUGH THE FALL AND REVOLT OF ADAM, THE WHOLE  
HUMAN RACE MADE ACCURSED AND DEGENERATE. OF  
ORIGINAL SIN.

I. How necessary the knowledge of ourselves is, its nature, the danger of mistake, its leading parts, sect. 1, 2, 3. II. The causes of Adam's fearful fall, sect. 4. III. The effects of the fall extending to Adam's posterity, and all the creatures, sect. 5, to the end of the Chapter, where the nature, propagation, and effect of original sin are considered.

#### *Sections.*

1. The knowledge of ourselves most necessary. To use it properly we must be divested of pride, and clothed with true humility, which will dispose us to consider our fall, and embrace the mercy of God in Christ.
2. Though there is plausibility in the sentiment which stimulates us to self-admiration, the only sound sentiment is that which inclines us to true humbleness of mind. Pretexts for pride. The miserable vanity of sinful man.

3. Different views taken by carnal wisdom and by conscience, which appeals to divine justice as its standard. The knowledge of ourselves, consisting of two parts, the former of which having already been discussed, the latter is here considered.
4. In considering this latter part, two points to be considered ; 1. How it happened that Adam involved himself and the whole human race in this dreadful calamity. This the result not of sensual intemperance, but of infidelity, (the source of other heinous sins,) which led to revolt from God, from whom all true happiness must be derived. An enumeration of the other sins produced by the infidelity of the first man.
5. The second point to be considered is, the extent to which the contagious influence of the fall extends. It extends, 1. To all the creatures, though unoffending ; and, 2. To the whole posterity of Adam. Hence hereditary corruption, or original sin, and the depravation of a nature which was previously pure and good. This depravation communicated to the whole posterity of Adam, but not in the way supposed by the Pelagians and Celestians.
6. Depravation communicated not merely by imitation, but by propagation. This proved, 1. From the contrast drawn between Adam and Christ. Confirmation from passages of Scripture ; 2. From the general declaration that we are the children of wrath.
7. Objection, that if Adam's sin is propagated to his posterity, the soul must be derived by transmission. Answer. Another objection, viz., that children cannot derive corruption from pious parents. Answer.
8. Definition of original sin. Two parts in the definition. Exposition of the latter part. Original sin exposes us to the wrath of God. It also produces in us the works of the flesh. Other definitions considered.
9. Exposition of the former part of the definition, viz., that hereditary depravity extends to all the faculties of the soul.
10. From the exposition of both parts of the definition it follows that God is not the author of sin, the whole human race being corrupted by an inherent vitiousness.
11. This, however, is not from nature, but is an adventitious quality. Accordingly, the dream of the Manichees as to two principles vanishes.

1. It was not without reason that the ancient proverb so strongly recommended to man the knowledge of himself. For if it is deemed disgraceful to be ignorant of things pertaining to the business of life, much more disgraceful is self-ignorance, in consequence of which we miserably deceive ourselves in matters of the highest moment, and so walk blind-



fold. But the more useful the precept is, the more careful we must be not to use it preposterously, as we see certain philosophers have done. For they, when exhorting man to know himself, state the motive to be, that he may not be ignorant of his own excellence and dignity. They wish him to see nothing in himself but what will fill him with vain confidence, and inflate him with pride. But self-knowledge consists in this, *first*, When reflecting on what God gave us at our creation, and still continues graciously to give, we perceive how great the excellence of our nature would have been had its integrity remained, and, at the same time, remember that we have nothing of our own, but depend entirely on God, from whom we hold at pleasure whatever he has seen it meet to bestow; *secondly*, When viewing our miserable condition since Adam's fall, all confidence and boasting are overthrown, we blush for shame, and feel truly humble. For as God at first formed us in his own image, that he might elevate our minds to the pursuit of virtue, and the contemplation of eternal life, so to prevent us from heartlessly burying those noble qualities which distinguish us from the lower animals, it is of importance to know that we were endued with reason and intelligence, in order that we might cultivate a holy and honourable life, and regard a blessed immortality as our destined aim. At the same time, it is impossible to think of our primeval dignity without being immediately reminded of the sad spectacle of our ignominy and corruption, ever since we fell from our original in the person of our first parent. In this way, we feel dissatisfied with ourselves, and become truly humble, while we are inflamed with new desires to seek after God, in whom each may regain those good qualities of which all are found to be utterly destitute.

2. In examining ourselves, the search which divine truth enjoins, and the knowledge which it demands, are such as may indispose us to every thing like confidence in our own powers, leave us devoid of all means of boasting, and so incline us to submission. This is the course which we must follow, if we would attain to the true goal, both in speculation and practice. I am not unaware how much more

plausible the view is, which invites us rather to ponder on our good qualities, than to contemplate what must overwhelm us with shame—our miserable destitution and ignominy. There is nothing more acceptable to the human mind than flattery, and, accordingly, when told that its endowments are of a high order, it is apt to be excessively credulous. Hence it is not strange that the greater part of mankind have erred so egregiously in this matter. Owing to the innate self-love by which all are blinded, we most willingly persuade ourselves that we do not possess a single quality which is deserving of hatred; and hence, independent of any countenance from without, general credit is given to the very foolish idea, that man is perfectly sufficient of himself for all the purposes of a good and happy life. If any are disposed to think more modestly, and concede somewhat to God, that they may not seem to arrogate every thing as their own, still, in making the division, they apportion matters so, that the chief ground of confidence and boasting always remains with themselves. Then, if a discourse is pronounced which flatters the pride spontaneously springing up in man's inmost heart, nothing seems more delightful. Accordingly, in every age, he who is most forward in extolling the excellence of human nature, is received with the loudest applause. But be this heralding of human excellence what it may, by teaching man to rest in himself, it does nothing more than fascinate by its sweetness, and, at the same time, so delude as to drown in perdition all who assent to it. For what avails it to proceed in vain confidence, to deliberate, resolve, plan, and attempt what we deem pertinent to the purpose, and, at the very outset, prove deficient and destitute both of sound intelligence and true virtue, though we still confidently persist till we rush headlong on destruction? But this is the best that can happen to those who put confidence in their own powers. Whosoever, therefore, gives heed to those teachers, who merely employ us in contemplating our good qualities, so far from making progress in self-knowledge, will be plunged into the most pernicious ignorance.

3. While revealed truth concurs with the general consent of mankind in teaching that the second part of wisdom con-

sists in self-knowledge, they differ greatly as to the method by which this knowledge is to be acquired. In the judgment of the flesh man deems his self-knowledge complete, when, with overweening confidence in his own intelligence and integrity, he takes courage, and spurs himself on to virtuous deeds, and when, declaring war upon vice, he uses his utmost endeavour to attain to the honourable and the fair. But he who tries himself by the standard of divine justice, finds nothing to inspire him with confidence; and hence, the more thorough his self-examination, the greater his despondency. Abandoning all dependence on himself, he feels that he is utterly incapable of duly regulating his conduct. It is not the will of God, however, that we should forget the primeval dignity which he bestowed on our first parents—a dignity which may well stimulate us to the pursuit of goodness and justice. It is impossible for us to think of our first original, or the end for which we were created, without being urged to meditate on immortality, and to seek the kingdom of God. But such meditation, so far from raising our spirits, rather casts them down, and makes us humble. For what is our original? One from which we have fallen. What the end of our creation? One from which we have altogether strayed, so that, weary of our miserable lot, we groan, and groaning sigh for a dignity now lost. When we say that man should see nothing in himself which can raise his spirits, our meaning is, that he possesses nothing on which he can proudly plume himself. Hence, in considering the knowledge which man ought to have of himself, it seems proper to divide it thus, first, to consider the end for which he was created, and the qualities—by no means contemptible qualities—with which he was endued, thus urging him to meditate on divine worship and the future life; and, secondly, to consider his faculties, or rather want of faculties—a want which, when perceived, will annihilate all his confidence, and cover him with confusion. The tendency of the former view is to teach him what his duty is, of the latter, to make him aware how far he is able to perform it. We shall treat of both in their proper order.

4. As the act which God punished so severely must have



been not a trivial fault, but a heinous crime, it will be necessary to attend to the peculiar nature of the sin which produced Adam's fall, and provoked God to inflict such fearful vengeance on the whole human race. The common idea of sensual intemperance is childish. The sum and substance of all virtues could not consist in abstinence from a single fruit amid a general abundance of every delicacy that could be desired, the earth, with happy fertility, yielding not only abundance, but also endless variety. We must, therefore, look deeper than sensual intemperance. The prohibition to touch the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was a trial of obedience, that Adam, by observing it, might prove his willing submission to the command of God. For the very term shows the end of the precept to have been to keep him contented with his lot, and not allow him arrogantly to aspire beyond it. The promise, which gave him hope of eternal life as long as he should eat of the tree of life, and, on the other hand, the fearful denunciation of death the moment he should taste of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, were meant to prove and exercise his faith. Hence it is not difficult to infer in what way Adam provoked the wrath of God. Augustine, indeed, is not far from the mark, when he says, (in Psal. xix.,) that pride was the beginning of all evil, because, had not man's ambition carried him higher than he was permitted, he might have continued in his first estate. A further definition, however, must be derived from the kind of temptation which Moses describes. When, by the subtlety of the devil, the woman faithlessly abandoned the command of God, her fall obviously had its origin in disobedience. This Paul confirms, when he says, that, by the disobedience of one man, all were destroyed. At the same time, it is to be observed, that the first man revolted against the authority of God, not only in allowing himself to be ensnared by the wiles of the devil, but also by despising the truth, and turning aside to lies. Assuredly, when the word of God is despised, all reverence for Him is gone. His majesty cannot be duly honoured among us, nor his worship maintained in its integrity, unless we hang as it were upon his lips. Hence infidelity was at the root of the revolt. From infi-



delity, again, sprang ambition and pride, together with ingratitude; because Adam, by longing for more than was allotted him, manifested contempt for the great liberality with which God had enriched him. It was surely monstrous impiety that a son of earth should deem it little to have been made in the likeness, unless he were also made the equal of God. If the apostacy by which man withdraws from the authority of his Maker, nay, petulantly shakes off his allegiance to him, is a foul and execrable crime, it is in vain to extenuate the sin of Adam. Nor was it simple apostacy. It was accompanied with foul insult to God, the guilty pair assenting to Satan's calumnies when he charged God with malice, envy, and falsehood. In fine, infidelity opened the door to ambition, and ambition was the parent of rebellion, man casting off the fear of God, and giving free vent to his lust. Hence, Bernard truly says, that, in the present day, a door of salvation is opened to us when we receive the gospel with our ears, just as by the same entrance, when thrown open to Satan, death was admitted. Never would Adam have dared to show any repugnance to the command of God if he had not been incredulous as to his word. The strongest curb to keep all his affections under due restraint, would have been the belief that nothing was better than to cultivate righteousness by obeying the commands of God, and that the highest possible felicity was to be loved by him.<sup>1</sup> Man, therefore, when carried away by the blasphemies of Satan, did his very utmost to annihilate the whole glory of God.

5. As Adam's spiritual life would have consisted in remaining united and bound to his Maker, so estrangement from him was the death of his soul. Nor is it strange that he who perverted the whole order of nature in heaven and earth deteriorated his race by his revolt. "The whole creation groaneth," saith St Paul, "being made subject to vanity, not willingly," (Rom. viii. 20, 22.) If the reason is asked, there cannot be a doubt that creation bears part of the punishment deserved by man, for whose use all other

<sup>1</sup> The latter clause of this sentence is omitted in the French.

creatures were made. Therefore, since through man's fault a curse has extended above and below, over all the regions of the world, there is nothing unreasonable in its extending to all his offspring. After the heavenly image in man was effaced, he not only was himself punished by a withdrawal of the ornaments in which he had been arrayed, viz., wisdom, virtue, justice, truth, and holiness, and by the substitution in their place of those dire pests, blindness, impotence, vanity, impurity, and unrighteousness, but he involved his posterity also, and plunged them in the same wretchedness. This is the hereditary corruption to which early Christian writers gave the name of Original Sin, meaning by the term the depravation of a nature formerly good and pure. The subject gave rise to much discussion, there being nothing more remote from common apprehension, than that the fault of one should render all guilty, and so become a common sin. This seems to be the reason why the oldest doctors of the church only glance obscurely at the point, or, at least, do not explain it so clearly as it required. This timidity, however, could not prevent the rise of a Pelagius with his profane fiction—that Adam sinned only to his own hurt, but did no hurt to his posterity. Satan, by thus craftily hiding the disease, tried to render it incurable. But when it was clearly proved from Scripture that the sin of the first man passed to all his posterity, recourse was had to the cavil, that it passed by imitation, and not by propagation. The orthodox, therefore, and more especially Augustine, laboured to show, that we are not corrupted by acquired wickedness, but bring an innate corruption from the very womb. It was the greatest impudence to deny this. But no man will wonder at the presumption of the Pelagians and Celestians, who has learned from the writings of that holy man how extreme the effrontery of these heretics was. Surely there is no ambiguity in David's confession, "I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me," (Ps. li. 5.) His object in the passage is not to throw blame on his parents; but the better to commend the goodness of God towards him, he properly reiterates the confession of impurity from his very birth. As it is clear, that there was no peculiarity in David's case, it

follows that it is only an instance of the common lot of the whole human race. All of us, therefore, descending from an impure seed, come into the world tainted with the contagion of sin. Nay, before we behold the light of the sun we are in God's sight defiled and polluted. "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one," says the Book of Job, (Job xiv. 4.)

6. We thus see that the impurity of parents is transmitted to their children, so that all, without exception, are originally depraved. The commencement of this depravity will not be found until we ascend to the first parent of all as the fountain head. We must, therefore, hold it for certain, that, in regard to human nature, Adam was not merely a progenitor, but, as it were, a root, and that, accordingly, by his corruption, the whole human race was deservedly vitiated. This is plain from the contrast which the Apostle draws between Adam and Christ, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned; even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord," (Rom. v. 19-21.) To what quibble will the Pelagians here recur? That the sin of Adam was propagated by imitation! Is the righteousness of Christ then available to us only in so far as it is an example held forth for our imitation? Can any man tolerate such blasphemy? But if, out of all controversy, the righteousness of Christ, and thereby life, is ours by communication, it follows that both of these were lost in Adam that they might be recovered in Christ, whereas sin and death were brought in by Adam, that they might be abolished in Christ. There is no obscurity in the words, "As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." Accordingly, the relation subsisting between the two is this, As Adam, by his ruin, involved and ruined us, so Christ, by his grace, restored us to salvation. In this clear light of truth I cannot see any need of a longer or more laborious proof. Thus, too, in the First Epistle to the Corinthians, when Paul would confirm believers in the confident hope of the resurrection, he shows that the life is recovered in Christ



which was lost in Adam, (1 Cor. xv. 22.) Having already declared that all died in Adam, he now also openly testifies that all are imbued with the taint of sin. Condemnation, indeed, could not reach those who are altogether free from blame. But his meaning cannot be made clearer than from the other member of the sentence, in which he shows that the hope of life is restored in Christ. Every one knows that the only mode in which this is done is, when by a wondrous communication Christ transfuses into us the power of his own righteousness, as it is elsewhere said, "The Spirit is life because of righteousness," (1 Cor. xv. 22.) Therefore, the only explanation which can be given of the expression, "in Adam all died," is, that he by sinning not only brought disaster and ruin upon himself, but also plunged our nature into like destruction; and that not only in one fault, in a matter not pertaining to us, but by the corruption into which he himself fell, he infected his whole seed. Paul never could have said that all are "by nature the children of wrath," (Eph. ii. 3,) if they had not been cursed from the womb. And it is obvious, that the nature there referred to is not nature such as God created, but as vitiated in Adam; for it would have been most incongruous to make God the author of death. Adam, therefore, when he corrupted himself, transmitted the contagion to all his posterity. For a heavenly Judge, even our Saviour himself, declares that all are by birth vicious and depraved, when he says that "that which is born of the flesh is flesh," (John iii. 6,) and that therefore the gate of life is closed against all until they have been regenerated.

7. To the understanding of this subject, there is no necessity for an anxious discussion, (which in no small degree perplexed the ancient doctors,) as to whether the soul of the child comes by transmission from the soul of the parent.<sup>1</sup> It should be enough for us to know that Adam was made

<sup>1</sup> The French is, "Assavoir, si l'ame du fils procede de la substance de l'ame paternelle, veu que c'est en l'ame que reside le peché original." That is, whether the soul of the child is derived from the substance of the soul of the parent, seeing it is in the soul that original sin resides.



the depository of the endowments which God was pleased to bestow on human nature, and that, therefore, when he lost what he had received, he lost not only for himself but for us all. Why feel any anxiety about the transmission of the soul, when we know that the qualities which Adam lost he received for us not less than for himself, that they were not gifts to a single man, but attributes of the whole human race? There is nothing absurd, therefore, in the view, that when he was divested, his nature was left naked and destitute, that he having been defiled by sin, the pollution extends to all his seed. Thus, from a corrupt root corrupt branches proceeding, transmit their corruption to the saplings which spring from them. The children being vitiated in their parent, conveyed the taint to the grandchildren; in other words, corruption commencing in Adam, is, by perpetual descent, conveyed from those preceding to those coming after them. The cause of the contagion is neither in the substance of the flesh nor the soul, but God was pleased to ordain that those gifts which he had bestowed on the first man, that man should lose as well for his descendants as for himself. The Pelagian cavil, as to the improbability of children deriving corruption from pious parents, whereas, they ought rather to be sanctified by their purity, is easily refuted. Children come not by spiritual regeneration but carnal descent.<sup>1</sup> Accordingly, as Augustine says, "Both the condemned unbeliever and the acquitted believer beget offspring not acquitted but condemned, because the nature which begets is corrupt."<sup>2</sup> Moreover, though godly parents do in some measure contribute to the holiness of their offspring, this is by the blessing of God; a blessing, however, which does not prevent the primary and universal curse of the whole race from previously taking effect. Guilt is from nature, whereas sanctification is from supernatural grace.

<sup>1</sup> The French is, "Les enfans ne descendent point de la generation spirituelle qui les serviteurs de Dieu ont du S. Esprit, mais de la generation charnelle qu'ils ont d'Adam." Children descend not from the spiritual generation which the servants of God have of the Holy Spirit, but the carnal generation which they have of Adam.

<sup>2</sup> Lib. contra Pelag. Cœlest. See also Ep. 157, ad Gregor., Lib. vii. Ep. 53.

8. But lest the thing itself of which we speak be unknown or doubtful, it will be proper to define original sin, (Calvin, in Conc. Trident. I., Dec. Sess. v.) I have no intention, however, to discuss all the definitions which different writers have adopted, but only to adduce the one which seems to me most accordant with truth. Original sin, then, may be defined a hereditary corruption and depravity of our nature, extending to all the parts of the soul, which first makes us obnoxious to the wrath of God, and then produces in us works which in Scripture are termed works of the flesh. This corruption is repeatedly designated by Paul by the term sin,<sup>1</sup> (Gal. v. 19;) while the works which proceed from it, such as adultery, fornication, theft, hatred, murder, revellings, he terms, in the same way, the fruits of sin, though in various passages of Scripture, and even by Paul himself, they are also termed sins. The two things, therefore, are to be distinctly observed, viz., that being thus perverted and corrupted in all the parts of our nature, we are, merely on account of such corruption, deservedly condemned by God, to whom nothing is acceptable but righteousness, innocence, and purity. This is not liability for another's fault. For when it is said, that the sin of Adam has made us obnoxious to the justice of God, the meaning is not, that we, who are in ourselves innocent and blameless, are bearing his guilt, but that since by his transgression we are all placed under the curse, he is said to have brought us under obligation.<sup>2</sup> Through him, however, not only has punishment been derived, but pollution instilled, for which punishment is justly due. Hence Augustine, though he often terms it another's sin, (that he may more clearly show how

<sup>1</sup> The French adds, " Sans adjouster Originel ;"—without adding Original.

<sup>2</sup> The French is, " Car en ce qui est dit, que par Adam nous sommes fait redevables au jugement de Dieu, ce ne'st pas a dire que nous soyons innocens, et que sans avoir merit  aucune peine nous portions la folle-enchere de son pech  ; mais pourceque par sa transgression nous sommes tous envelopp s de confusion, il est dit nous avoir tous obligez." For when it is said, that by Adam we are made liable to the judgment of God, the meaning is, not that we are innocent, and that without having deserved any punishment, we are made to pay dear for his sin, but because by his transgression we are all covered with confusion, he is said to have bound us.

it comes to us by descent,) at the same time asserts that it is each individual's own sin.<sup>1</sup> And the Apostle most distinctly testifies, that "death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned," (Rom. v. 12;) that is, are involved in original sin, and polluted by its stain. Hence, even infants bringing their condemnation with them from their mother's womb, suffer not for another's, but for their own defect. For although they have not yet produced the fruits of their own unrighteousness, they have the seed implanted in them. Nay, their whole nature is, as it were, a seed-bed of sin, and therefore cannot but be odious and abominable to God. Hence it follows, that it is properly deemed sinful in the sight of God; for there could be no condemnation without guilt. Next comes the other point, viz., that this perversity in us never ceases, but constantly produces new fruits, in other words, those works of the flesh which we formerly described; just as a lighted furnace sends forth sparks and flames, or a fountain without ceasing pours out water. Hence, those who have defined original sin as the want of the original righteousness which we ought to have had, though they substantially comprehend the whole case, do not significantly enough express its power and energy. For our nature is not only utterly devoid of goodness, but so prolific in all kinds of evil, that it can never be idle. Those who term it *concupiscence* use a word not very inappropriate, provided it were added, (this, however, many will by no means concede,) that everything which is in man, from the intellect to the will, from the soul even to the flesh, is defiled and pervaded with this concupiscence; or, to express it more briefly, that the whole man is in himself nothing else than concupiscence.

9. I have said, therefore, that all the parts of the soul were possessed by sin, ever since Adam revolted from the fountain of righteousness. For not only did the inferior appetites entice him, but abominable impiety seized upon the very citadel of the mind, and pride penetrated to his inmost heart, (Rom. vii. 12; Book IV., chap. xv., sec. 10-12,) so that it is foolish and unmeaning to confine the corruption thence proceeding

<sup>1</sup> In many passages, and especially in his treatise, *De Peccatorum Merit. et Remiss.* Lib. iii. cap. 8.



to what are called sensual motions, or to call it an excitement, which allures, excites, and drags the single part which they call sensuality into sin. Here Peter Lombard has displayed gross ignorance, (Lomb., Lib. ii. Dist. 31.) When investigating the seat of corruption, he says it is in the flesh, (as Paul declares,) not properly, indeed, but as being more apparent in the flesh. As if Paul had meant that only a part of the soul, and not the whole nature, was opposed to supernatural grace. Paul himself leaves no room for doubt, when he says, that corruption does not dwell in one part only, but that no part is free from its deadly taint. For, speaking of corrupt nature, he not only condemns the inordinate nature of the appetites, but, in particular, declares that the understanding is subjected to blindness, and the heart to depravity, (Eph. iv. 17, 18.) The third chapter of the Epistle to the Romans is nothing but a description of original sin. The same thing appears more clearly from the mode of renovation. For the spirit, which is contrasted with the old man, and the flesh, denotes not only the grace by which the sensual or inferior part of the soul is corrected, but includes a complete reformation of all its parts, (Eph. iv. 23.) And, accordingly, Paul enjoins not only that gross appetites be suppressed, but that we be renewed in the spirit of our mind, (Eph. iv. 23,) as he elsewhere tells us to be transformed by the renewing of our mind, (Rom. xii. 2.) Hence it follows, that that part in which the dignity and excellence of the soul are most conspicuous, has not only been wounded, but so corrupted, that mere cure is not sufficient. There must be a new nature. How far sin has seized both on the mind and heart, we shall shortly see. Here I only wished briefly to observe, that the whole man, from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot, is so deluged, as it were, that no part remains exempt from sin, and, therefore, everything which proceeds from him is imputed as sin. Thus Paul says, that all carnal thoughts and affections are enmity against God, and consequently death, (Rom. viii. 7.)

10. Let us have done, then, with those who dare to inscribe the name of God on their vices, because we say that



men are born vicious. The divine workmanship, which they ought to look for in the nature of Adam, when still entire and uncorrupted, they absurdly expect to find in their depravity. The blame of our ruin rests with our own carnality, not with God, its only cause being our degeneracy from our original condition. And let no one here clamour that God might have provided better for our safety by preventing Adam's fall. This objection, which, from the daring presumption implied in it, is odious to every pious mind, relates to the mystery of predestination, which will afterwards be considered in its own place, (Tertull. de Præscript. Calvin, Lib. de Predest.) Meanwhile, let us remember that our ruin is attributable to our own depravity, that we may not insinuate a charge against God himself, the Author of nature. It is true that nature has received a mortal wound, but there is a great difference between a wound inflicted from without, and one inherent in our first condition. It is plain that this wound was inflicted by sin; and, therefore, we have no ground of complaint except against ourselves. This is carefully taught in Scripture. For the Preacher says, "Lo, this only have I found, that God made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions," (Eccl. vii. 29.) Since man, by the kindness of God, was made upright, but by his own infatuation fell away unto vanity, his destruction is obviously attributable only to himself, (Athanas. in Orat. Cont. Idola.)

11. We say, then, that man is corrupted by a natural viciousness, but not by one which proceeded from nature. In saying that it proceeded not from nature, we mean that it was rather an adventitious event which befell man, than a substantial property assigned to him from the beginning.<sup>1</sup> We, however, call it *natural* to prevent any one from supposing that each individual contracts it by depraved habit, whereas all receive it by a hereditary law. And we have authority

<sup>1</sup> The French is, "Nous nions qu'elle soit de nature, afin de monstrier que c'est plutot une qualité survenue à l'homme qu'une propriété de sa substance, laquelle ait été dès le commencement enracinée en lui;"—we deny that it is of nature, in order to show that it is rather a quality superadded to man than a property of his substance, which has been from the beginning rooted in him.

for so calling it. For, on the same ground, the apostle says, that we are "by nature the children of wrath," (Eph. ii. 3.) How could God, who takes pleasure in the meanest of his works, be offended with the noblest of them all? The offence is not with the work itself, but the corruption of the work. Wherefore, if it is not improper to say, that, in consequence of the corruption of human nature, man is naturally hateful to God, it is not improper to say, that he is naturally vicious and depraved. Hence, in the view of our corrupt nature, Augustine hesitates not to call those sins natural which necessarily reign in the flesh wherever the grace of God is wanting. This disposes of the absurd notion of the Manichees, who, imagining that man was essentially wicked, went the length of assigning him a different Creator, that they might thus avoid the appearance of attributing the cause and origin of evil to a righteous God.

## CHAPTER II.

## MAN NOW DEPRIVED OF FREEDOM OF WILL, AND MISERABLY ENSLAVED.

Having in the first chapter treated of the fall of man, and the corruption of the human race, it becomes necessary to inquire, Whether the sons of Adam are deprived of all liberty ; and if any particle of liberty remains, how far its power extends? The four next chapters are devoted to this question. This second chapter may be reduced to three general heads :—I. The foundation of the whole discussion. II. The opinions of others on the subject of human freedom, sec. 2–9. III. The true doctrine on the subject, sec. 10–27.

*Sections.*

1. Connection of the previous with the four following chapters. In order to lay a proper foundation for the discussion of free will, two obstacles in the way to be removed, viz., sloth and pride. The basis and sum of the whole discussion. The solid structure of this basis, and a clear demonstration of it by the argument *à majori ad minus*. Also from the inconveniences and absurdities arising from the obstacle of pride.
2. The second part of the chapter containing the opinions of others.
  1. The opinions of philosophers.
3. The labyrinths of philosophers. A summary of the opinion common to all the philosophers.
4. The opinions of others continued, viz., The opinions of the ancient theologians on the subject of free will. These composed partly of Philosophy and partly of Theology. Hence their falsehood, extravagance, perplexity, variety, and contradiction. Too great fondness for philosophy in the Church has obscured the knowledge of God and of ourselves. The better to explain the opinions of philosophers, a definition of Free Will given. Wide difference between this definition and these opinions.
5. Certain things annexed to Free Will by the ancient theologians, especially the Schoolmen. Many kinds of Free Will according to them.
6. Puzzles of scholastic divines in the explanation of this question.
7. The conclusion that so trivial a matter ought not to be so much

magnified. Objection of those who have a fondness for new terms in the Church. Objection answered.

8. Another answer. The Fathers, and especially Augustine, while retaining the term Free Will, yet condemned the doctrine of the heretics on the subject, as destroying the grace of God.
9. The language of the ancient writers on the subject of Free Will is, with the exception of that of Augustine, almost unintelligible. Still they set little or no value on human virtue, and ascribe the praise of all goodness to the Holy Spirit.
10. The last part of the chapter, containing a simple statement of the true doctrine. The fundamental principle is, that man first begins to profit in the knowledge of himself when he becomes sensible of his ruined condition. This confirmed, 1. by passages of Scripture.
11. Confirmed, 2. by the testimony of ancient theologians.
12. The foundation being laid, to show how far the power both of the intellect and will now extends, it is maintained in general, and in conformity with the views of Augustine and the Schoolmen, that the natural endowments of man are corrupted, and the supernatural almost entirely lost. A separate consideration of the powers of the Intellect and the Will. Some general considerations, 1. The intellect possesses some powers of perception. Still it labours under a twofold defect.
13. Man's intelligence extends both to things terrestrial and celestial. The power of the intellect in regard to the knowledge of things terrestrial. First, with regard to matters of civil polity.
14. The power of the intellect, secondly, with regard to the arts. Particular gifts in this respect conferred on individuals, and attesting the grace of God.
15. The use of this knowledge of things terrestrial, first, that we may see how human nature, notwithstanding of its fall, is still adorned by God with excellent endowments.
16. Use of this knowledge continued. Secondly, that we may see that these endowments bestowed on individuals are intended for the common benefit of mankind. They are sometimes conferred even on the wicked.
17. Some portion of human nature still left. This, whatever be the amount of it, should be ascribed entirely to the divine indulgence. Reason of this. Examples.
18. Second part of the discussion, namely, that which relates to the power of the human intellect in regard to things celestial. These reducible to three heads, namely, divine knowledge, adoption, and will. The blindness of man in regard to these proved and illustrated by a simile.
19. Proved, moreover, by passages of Scripture, showing, 1. That the sons of Adam are endued with some light, but not enough to enable them to comprehend God. Reasons.



20. Adoption not from nature, but from our heavenly Father, being sealed in the elect by the Spirit of regeneration. Obvious from many passages of Scripture, that, previous to regeneration, the human intellect is altogether unable to comprehend the things relating to regeneration. This fully proved. First argument. Second argument. Third argument.
21. Fourth argument. Scripture ascribes the glory of our adoption and salvation to God only. The human intellect blind as to heavenly things until it is illuminated. Disposal of a heretical objection.
22. Human intellect ignorant of the true knowledge of the divine law. This proved by the testimony of an Apostle, by an inference from the same testimony, and from a consideration of the end and definition of the Law of Nature. Plato obviously mistaken in attributing all sins to ignorance.
23. Themistius nearer the truth in maintaining, that the delusion of the intellect is manifested not so much in generals as in particulars. Exception to this rule.
24. Themistius, however, mistaken in thinking that the intellect is so very seldom deceived as to generals. Blindness of the human intellect when tested by the standard of the Divine Law, in regard both to the first and second tables. Examples.
25. A middle view to be taken, viz., that all sins are not imputable to ignorance, and, at the same time, that all sins do not imply intentional malice. All the human mind conceives and plans in this matter is evil in the sight of God. Need of divine direction every moment.
26. The will examined. The natural desire of good, which is universally felt, no proof of the freedom of the human will. Two fallacies as to the use of terms, *appetite* and *good*.
27. The doctrine of the Schoolmen on this subject opposed to and refuted by Scripture. The whole man being subject to the power of sin, it follows that the will, which is the chief seat of sin, requires to be most strictly curbed. Nothing ours but sin.

1. HAVING seen that the dominion of sin, ever since the first man was brought under it, not only extends to the whole race, but has complete possession of every soul, it now remains to consider more closely, whether, from the period of being thus enslaved, we have been deprived of all liberty ; and if any portion still remains, how far its power extends. In order to facilitate the answer to this question, it may be proper in passing to point out the course which our inquiry ought to take. The best method of avoiding error is to consider the dangers which beset us on either side. Man being

devoid of all uprightness, immediately takes occasion from the fact to indulge in sloth, and having no ability in himself for the study of righteousness, treats the whole subject as if he had no concern in it. On the other hand, man cannot arrogate any thing, however minute, to himself, without robbing God of his honour, and through rash confidence subjecting himself to a fall. To keep free of both these rocks,<sup>1</sup> our proper course will be, first, to show that man has no remaining good in himself, and is beset on every side by the most miserable destitution; and then teach him to aspire to the goodness of which he is devoid, and the liberty of which he has been deprived: thus giving him a stronger stimulus to exertion than he could have if he imagined himself possessed of the highest virtue. How necessary the latter point is, every body sees. As to the former, several seem to entertain more doubt than they ought. For it being admitted as incontrovertible that man is not to be denied any thing that is truly his own, it ought also to be admitted, that he is to be deprived of every thing like false boasting. If man had no title to glory in himself, when, by the kindness of his Maker, he was distinguished by the noblest ornaments, how much ought he to be humbled now, when his ingratitude has thrust him down from the highest glory to extreme ignominy? At the time when he was raised to the highest pinnacle of honour, all which Scripture attributes to him is, that he was created in the image of God, thereby intimating that the blessings in which his happiness consisted were not his own, but derived by divine communication. What remains, therefore, now that man is stript of all his glory, than to acknowledge the God for whose kindness he failed to be grateful, when he was loaded with the riches of his grace? Not having glorified him by the acknowledgment of his blessings, now, at least, he ought to glorify him by the confession of his poverty. In truth, it is no less useful for us to renounce all the praise of wisdom and virtue, than to aim at the glory of God. Those who invest us with more than we possess only add sacrilege to our ruin. For when we are taught to

<sup>1</sup> See *Calvin Adv. Theolog. Parisienses*, Art. 2. These two rocks are adverted to by *Augustine*, *Ep.* 47, *et in Joannem*, cap. 12.

contend in our own strength, what more is done than to lift us up, and then leave us to lean on a reed which immediately gives way? Indeed, our strength is exaggerated when it is compared to a reed. All that foolish men invent and prattle on this subject is mere smoke. Wherefore, it is not without reason that Augustine so often repeats the well-known saying, that free will is more destroyed than established by its defenders, (August. in Evang. Joann. Tract. 81.) It was necessary to premise this much for the sake of some who, when they hear that human virtue is totally overthrown, in order that the power of God in man may be exalted, conceive an utter dislike to the whole subject, as if it were perilous, not to say superfluous, whereas it is manifestly both most necessary and most useful.<sup>1</sup>

2. Having lately observed, that the faculties of the soul are seated in the mind and the heart, let us now consider how far the power of each extends. Philosophers generally maintain, that reason dwells in the mind like a lamp, throwing light on all its counsels, and like a queen, governing the will—that it is so pervaded with divine light as to be able to consult for the best, and so endued with vigour as to be able perfectly to command; that, on the contrary, sense is dull and short-sighted, always creeping on the ground, grovelling among inferior objects, and never rising to true vision; that the appetite, when it obeys reason, and does not allow itself to be subjugated by sense, is borne to the study of virtue, holds a straight course, and becomes transformed into will; but that when enslaved by sense, it is corrupted and depraved so as to degenerate into lust. In a word, since, according to their opinion, the faculties which I have mentioned above, namely, intellect, sense, and appetite, or will, (the latter being the term in ordinary use,) are seated in the soul, they maintain that the intellect is endued with reason, the best guide to a virtuous and happy life, provided it duly avails itself of its excellence, and exerts the power with which

<sup>1</sup> The French is, “Laquelle toutefois nous cognoistrons etre très-utile et qui plus est, etre un des fondemens de la religion;”—which, however, we shall know to be very useful, and what is more, to be one of the fundamentals of religion.



it is naturally endued ; that, at the same time, the inferior movement, which is termed sense, and by which the mind is led away to error and delusion, is of such a nature, that it can be tamed and gradually subdued by the power of reason. To the will, moreover, they give an intermediate place between reason and sense, regarding it as possessed of full power and freedom, whether to obey the former, or yield itself up to be hurried away by the latter.

3. Sometimes, indeed, convinced by their own experience, they do not deny how difficult it is for man to establish the supremacy of reason in himself, in as much as he is at one time enticed by the allurements of pleasure ; at another, deluded by a false semblance of good ; and, at another, impelled by unruly passions, and pulled away (to use Plato's expression) as by ropes or sinews, (Plato, *De Legibus*, lib. i.) For this reason, Cicero says, that the sparks given forth by nature are immediately extinguished by false opinions and depraved manners, (Cicero, *Tusc. Quæst.* lib. iii.) They confess that when once diseases of this description have seized upon the mind, their course is too impetuous to be easily checked, and they hesitate not to compare them to fiery steeds, which, having thrown off the charioteer, scamper away without restraint. At the same time, they set it down as beyond dispute, that virtue and vice are in our own power. For, (say they,) If it is in our choice to do this thing or that, it must also be in our choice not to do it : Again, If it is in our choice not to act, it must also be in our choice to act : But both in doing and abstaining we seem to act from free choice ; and, therefore, if we do good when we please, we can also refrain from doing it ; if we commit evil, we can also shun the commission of it, (Aristot. *Ethic.* lib. iii. c. 5.) Nay, some have gone the length of boasting, (Seneca, *passim*,) that it is the gift of the gods that we live, but our own that we live well and purely. Hence Cicero says, in the person of Cotta, that as every one acquires virtue for himself, no wise man ever thanked the gods for it. " We are praised," says he, " for virtue, and glory in virtue, but this could not be, if virtue were the gift of God, and not from ourselves," (Cicero, *De Nat. Deorum*.)



A little after, he adds, "The opinion of all mankind is, that fortune must be sought from God, wisdom from ourselves." Thus, in short, all philosophers maintain, that human reason is sufficient for right government; that the will, which is inferior to it, may indeed be solicited to evil by sense, but having a free choice, there is nothing to prevent it from following reason as its guide in all things.

4. Among ecclesiastical writers, although there is none who did not acknowledge that sound reason in man was seriously injured by sin, and the will greatly entangled by vicious desires, yet many of them made too near an approach to the philosophers. Some of the most ancient writers appear to me to have exalted human strength, from a fear that a distinct acknowledgment of its impotence might expose them to the jeers of the philosophers with whom they were disputing, and also furnish the flesh, already too much disinclined to good, with a new pretext for sloth. Therefore, to avoid teaching anything which the majority of mankind might deem absurd, they made it their study, in some measure, to reconcile the doctrine of Scripture with the dogmas of philosophy, at the same time making it their special care not to furnish any occasion to sloth. This is obvious from their words. Chrysostom says, "God having placed good and evil in our power, has given us full freedom of choice; he does not keep back the unwilling, but embraces the willing," (Homil. de Prodit. Judæ.) Again, "He who is wicked is often, when he so chooses, changed into good, and he who is good falls through sluggishness, and becomes wicked. For the Lord has made our nature free. He does not lay us under necessity, but furnishing apposite remedies, allows the whole to depend on the views of the patient," (Homil. 18, in Genesim.) Again, "As we can do nothing rightly until aided by the grace of God, so, until we bring forward what is our own, we cannot obtain favour from above," (Homil. 52.) He had previously said, "As the whole is not done by divine assistance, we ourselves must of necessity bring somewhat." Accordingly, one of his common expressions is, "Let us bring what is our own, God will supply

the rest." In unison with this, Jerome says, "It is ours to begin, God's to finish : it is ours to offer what we can, his to supply what we cannot," (Dialog. iii. Cont. Pelag.)

From these sentences, you see that they have bestowed on man more than he possesses for the study of virtue, because they thought that they could not shake off our innate sluggishness unless they argued that we sin by ourselves alone. With what skill they have thus argued we shall afterwards see. Assuredly we shall soon be able to show that the sentiments just quoted are most inaccurate.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, although the Greek Fathers, above others, and especially Chrysostom, have exceeded due bounds in extolling the powers of the human will, yet all ancient theologians, with the exception of Augustine, are so confused, vacillating, and contradictory on this subject, that no certainty can be obtained from their writings. It is needless, therefore, to be more particular in enumerating every separate opinion. It will be sufficient to extract from each as much as the exposition of the subject seems to require. Succeeding writers (every one courting applause for his acuteness in the defence of human nature) have uniformly, one after the other, gone more widely astray, until the common dogma came to be, that man was corrupted only in the sensual part of his nature, that reason remained entire, and will was scarcely impaired. Still the expression was often on their lips, that man's natural gifts were corrupted, and his supernatural<sup>2</sup> taken away. Of the thing implied by these words, however, scarcely one in a hundred had any distinct idea. Certainly, were I desirous clearly to express what the corruption of nature is, I would not seek for any other expression. But it is of great importance attentively to consider what the power of man now is when vitiated in all the parts of his nature, and deprived of supernatural gifts. Persons professing to be the disciples of Christ have spoken too much like the philosophers on this subject. As if human nature were still in its integrity, the term free will

<sup>1</sup> The French adds, " Pour en dire franchement ce qui en est ;"—to speak of them frankly as they deserve.

<sup>2</sup> The French adds the explanation, " Assavoir ceux qui concernoyent la vie celeste ;" that is to say, those which concern the heavenly life.

has always been in use among the Latins, while the Greeks were not ashamed to use a still more presumptuous term, viz., αὐτεξούσιον, as if man had still full power in himself.

But since the principle entertained by all, even the vulgar, is, that man is endued with free will, while some, who would be thought more skilful, know not how far its power extends; it will be necessary, first to consider the meaning of the term, and afterwards ascertain, by a simple appeal to Scripture, what man's natural power for good or evil is. The thing meant by free will, though constantly occurring in all writers, few have defined. (Origen,<sup>1</sup> however, seems to have stated the common opinion when he said, It is a power of reason to discern between good and evil; of will, to choose the one or other. Nor does Augustine differ from him when he says, It is a power of reason and will to choose the good, grace assisting,—to choose the bad, grace desisting. Bernard, while aiming at greater acuteness, speaks more obscurely, when he describes it as consent, in regard to the indestructible liberty of the will, and the inalienable judgment of reason. Anselm's definition is not very intelligible to ordinary understandings. He calls it a power of preserving rectitude on its own account. Peter Lombard, and the Schoolmen, preferred the definition of Augustine, both because it was clearer, and did not exclude divine grace, without which they saw that the will was not sufficient of itself. They, however, add something of their own, because they deemed it either better or necessary for clearer explanation. First, they agree that the term *will* (*arbitrium*) has reference to reason, whose office it is to distinguish between good and evil, and that the epithet *free* properly belongs to the will, which may incline either way. Wherefore, since liberty properly belongs to the will, Thomas Aquinas says, (Part I. Quæst. 83, Art. 3,) that the most congruous definition is to call free will an elective power, combining intelligence and appetite, but inclining more to appetite. We now perceive in what it is they suppose

<sup>1</sup> Orig. De Principiis, Lib. iii. It is given by Lombard, Lib. ii. Dist. xxiv. Bernard. de Grat. et Liber. Arbit. Anselm, Dialog. de Liber. Arbit. cap. xii. xiii. Lombard, Lib. ii. Dist. xxiv. sec. 5.



the faculty of free will to consist, viz., in reason and will. It remains to see how much they attribute to each.

5. In general, they are wont to place under the free will of man only intermediate things, viz., those which pertain not to the kingdom of God, while they refer true righteousness to the special grace of God and spiritual regeneration. The author of the work, "De Vocatione Gentium," (On the Calling of the Gentiles,<sup>1</sup>) wishing to show this, describes the will as threefold, viz., sensitive, animal, and spiritual. The two former, he says, are free to man, but the last is the work of the Holy Spirit. What truth there is in this will be considered in its own place. Our intention at present is only to mention the opinions of others, not to refute them. When writers treat of free will, their inquiry is chiefly directed not to what its power is in relation to civil or external actions, but to the obedience required by the divine law. The latter I admit to be the great question, but I cannot think the former should be altogether neglected; and I hope to be able to give the best reason for so thinking, (sec. 12 to 18.) The schools, however, have adopted a distinction which enumerates three kinds of freedom, (see Lombard, Lib. ii. Dist. 25;) the first, a freedom from necessity; the second, a freedom from sin; and the third, a freedom from misery: the first naturally so inherent in man, that he cannot possibly be deprived of it; while through sin the other two have been lost. I willingly admit this distinction, except in so far as it confounds *necessity* with *compulsion*. How widely the things differ, and how important it is to attend to the difference, will appear elsewhere.

6. All this being admitted, it will be beyond dispute, that free will does not enable any man to perform good works, unless he is assisted by grace; indeed, the special grace which the elect alone receive through regeneration. For I stay not to consider the extravagance of those who say that grace is offered equally and promiscuously to all, (Lomb. Lib. ii. Dist. 26.) But it has not yet been shown whether man is entirely deprived of the power of well-doing, or

<sup>1</sup> The French adds, ("qu'en attribue à St Ambroise;")—which is attributed to St Ambrose.



whether he still possesses it in some, though in a very feeble and limited degree—a degree so feeble and limited, that it can do nothing of itself, but when assisted by grace, is able also to perform its part. The Master of the Sentences, (Lombard, *ibid.*) wishing to explain this, teaches that a twofold grace is necessary to fit for any good work. The one he calls Operating. To it, it is owing that we effectually will what is good. The other, which succeeds this good will, and aids it, he calls Co-operating. My objection to this division (see *infra*, chap. iii. sec. 10, and chap. vii. sec. 9) is, that while it attributes the effectual desire of good to divine grace, it insinuates that man, by his own nature, desires good in some degree, though ineffectually.) Thus Bernard, while maintaining that a good will is the work of God, concedes this much to man, viz., that of his own nature he longs for such a good will. This differs widely from the view of Augustine, though Lombard pretends to have taken the division from him. Besides, there is an ambiguity in the second division, which has led to an erroneous interpretation. For it has been thought that we co-operate with subsequent grace, inasmuch as it pertains to us either to nullify the first grace, by rejecting it, or to confirm it, by obediently yielding to it. The author of the work *De Vocatione Gentium* expresses it thus: It is free to those who enjoy the faculty of reason to depart from grace, so that the not departing is a reward, and that which cannot be done without the co-operation of the Spirit is imputed as merit to those whose will might have made it otherwise, (Lib. ii. cap. iv.) It seemed proper to make these two observations in passing, that the reader may see how far I differ from the sounder of the Schoolmen. Still further do I differ from more modern sophists, who have departed even more widely than the Schoolmen from the ancient doctrine. The division, however, shows in what respect free will is attributed to man. For Lombard ultimately declares, (Lib. ii. Dist. 25,) that our freedom is not to the extent of leaving us equally inclined to good and evil in act or in thought, but only to the extent of freeing us from compulsion. This liberty is compatible with our being depraved, the servants of sin, able to do nothing but sin.

7. In this way, then, man is said to have free will, not because he has a free choice of good and evil, but because he acts voluntarily, and not by compulsion. This is perfectly true: but why should so small a matter have been dignified with so proud a title? An admirable freedom! that man is not forced to be the servant of sin, while he is, however, ἐθελοδούλος, (a voluntary slave;) his will being bound by the fetters of sin. I abominate mere verbal disputes, by which the Church is harassed to no purpose; but I think we ought religiously to eschew terms which imply some absurdity, especially in subjects where error is of pernicious consequence. How few are there who, when they hear free will attributed to man, do not immediately imagine that he is the master of his mind and will in such a sense, that he can of himself incline himself either to good or evil? It may be said that such dangers are removed by carefully expounding the meaning to the people. But such is the proneness of the human mind to go astray, that it will more quickly draw error from one little word, than truth from a lengthened discourse. Of this, the very term in question furnishes too strong a proof. For the explanation given by ancient Christian writers having been lost sight of, almost all who have come after them, by attending only to the etymology of the term, have been led to indulge a fatal confidence.

8. As to the Fathers, (if their authority weighs with us,) they have the term constantly in their mouths; but they, at the same time, declare what extent of meaning they attach to it. In particular, Augustine hesitates not to call the will *a slave*.<sup>1</sup> In another passage, he is offended with those who deny free will; but his chief reason for this is explained when he says, "Only, lest any one should presume so to deny freedom of will, from a desire to excuse sin." It is certain, he elsewhere admits, that without the Spirit the will of man is not free, inasmuch as it is subject to lusts which chain

<sup>1</sup> August. Lib. i. cont. Julian. For the subsequent quotations, see Homil. 53, in Joannem; Ad Anast. Epist. 144; De Perf. Just.; Eucher. ad Laur. c. 30; Idem ad Bonifac. Lib. iii. c. 8; Ibid. c. 7; Idem ad Bonifac. Lib. i. c. 3; Ibid. Lib. iii. cap. 7; Idem, Lib. de Verbis Apost. Serm. 3; Lib. de Spiritu et Litera, cap. 30.

and master it. And again, that nature began to want liberty the moment the will was vanquished by the revolt into which it fell. Again, that man, by making a bad use of free will, lost both himself and his will. Again, that free will having been made a captive, can do nothing in the way of righteousness. Again, that no will is free which has not been made so by divine grace. Again, that the righteousness of God is not fulfilled when the law orders, and man acts, as it were, by his own strength, but when the Spirit assists, and the will (not the free will of man, but the will freed by God) obeys. He briefly states the ground of all these observations, when he says, that man at his creation received a great degree of free will, but lost it by sinning. In another place, after showing that free will is established by grace, he strongly inveighs against those who arrogate any thing to themselves without grace. His words are, "How much soever miserable men presume to plume themselves on free will before they are made free, or on their strength after they are made free, they do not consider that, in the very expression *free will*, liberty is implied. 'Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty,' (2 Cor. iii. 17.) If, therefore, they are the servants of sin, why do they boast of free will? He who has been vanquished is the servant of him who vanquished him. But if men have been made free, why do they boast of it as of their own work? Are they so free that they are unwilling to be the servants of Him who has said, 'Without me ye can do nothing'?" (John xv. 5.) In another passage he even seems to ridicule the word, when he says,<sup>1</sup> "That the will is indeed free, but not freed—free of righteousness, but enslaved to sin." The same idea he elsewhere repeats and explains, when he says, "That man is not free from righteousness save by the choice of his will, and is not made free from sin save by the grace of the Saviour." Declaring that the freedom of man is nothing else than emancipation or manumission from righteousness, he seems to jest at the emptiness of the name. If any one, then, chooses to

<sup>1</sup> See August. de Corrept. et Grat. cap. 13. Adv. Lib. Arbit. See also August. Epist. 107. Also the first and last parts of Bernard's Treatise De Gratia et Libero Arbitrio.



make use of this term, without attaching any bad meaning to it, he shall not be troubled by me on that account ; but as it cannot be retained without very great danger, I think the abolition of it would be of great advantage to the Church. I am unwilling to use it myself ; and others, if they will take my advice, will do well to abstain from it.

9. It may, perhaps, seem that I have greatly prejudiced my own view by confessing that all the ecclesiastical writers, with the exception of Augustine, have spoken so ambiguously or inconsistently on this subject, that no certainty is attainable from their writings. Some will interpret this to mean, that I wish to deprive them of their right of suffrage, because they are opposed to me. Truly, however, I have had no other end in view than to consult, simply and in good faith, for the advantage of pious minds, which, if they trust to those writers for their opinion, will always fluctuate in uncertainty. At one time they teach, that man having been deprived of the power of free will must flee to grace alone ; at another, they equip or seem to equip him in armour of his own. It is not difficult, however, to show, that notwithstanding of the ambiguous manner in which those writers express themselves, they hold human virtue in little or no account, and ascribe the whole merit of all that is good to the Holy Spirit. To make this more manifest, I may here quote some passages from them. What, then, is meant by Cyprian in the passage so often lauded by Augustine,<sup>1</sup> "Let us glory in nothing, because nothing is ours," unless it be, that man being utterly destitute, considered in himself, should entirely depend on God ? What is meant by Augustine and Eucherius,<sup>2</sup> when they expound that Christ is the tree of life, and that whoso puts forth his hand to it shall live ; that the choice of the will is the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and that he who, forsaking the grace of God, tastes of it shall die ? What is meant by Chrysostom, when he says, "That every man is not only naturally a sinner, but is wholly sin" ? If there is nothing good in us ; if

<sup>1</sup> August. de Prædest. Sanct. Idem ad Bonifacium, Lib. iv. et alibi. Eucher. Lib. in Genesin. Chrysost. Homil. in Adventu.

<sup>2</sup> The French adds, "Ancien evesque de Lion ;" ancient bishop of Lyons.



man, from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot, is wholly sin; if it is not even lawful to try how far the power of the will extends,—how can it be lawful to share the merit of a good work between God and man? I might quote many passages to the same effect from other writers; but lest any caviller should say, that I select those only which serve my purpose, and cunningly pass by those which are against me, I desist. This much, however, I dare affirm, that though they sometimes go too far in extolling free will, the main object which they had in view was to teach man entirely to renounce all self-confidence, and place his strength in God alone. I now proceed to a simple exposition of the truth in regard to the nature of man.

10. Here, however, I must again repeat what I premised at the outset of this chapter,<sup>1</sup> that he who is most deeply abased and alarmed, by the consciousness of his disgrace, nakedness, want, and misery, has made the greatest progress in the knowledge of himself. Man is in no danger of taking too much from himself, provided he learns that whatever he wants is to be recovered in God. But he cannot arrogate to himself one particle beyond his due, without losing himself in vain confidence, and, by transferring divine honour to himself, becoming guilty of the greatest impiety. And, assuredly, whenever our minds are seized with a longing to possess a somewhat of our own, which may reside in us rather than in God, we may rest assured that the thought is suggested by no other counsellor than he who enticed our first parents to aspire to be like gods, knowing good and evil.<sup>2</sup> It is sweet, indeed, to have so much virtue of our own as to be able to rest in ourselves; but let the many solemn passages by which our pride is sternly humbled, deter us from indulging this vain confidence: “Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm,” (Jer. xvii. 5.)

<sup>1</sup> The French has, “Au commencement de ce traité;” at the commencement of this treatise.

<sup>2</sup> The French adds, “Si c’est parole diabolique celle qui exalte homme en soy-mesme, il ne nous lui faut donner lieu, sinon que nous veuillions prendre conseil de nostre ennemi;”—if words which exalt man in himself are devilish, we must not give place to them unless we would take counsel of our enemy.

“He delighteth not in the strength of the horse; he taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man. The Lord taketh pleasure in those that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy,” (Ps. cxlvii. 10, 11.) “He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength,” (Is. xl. 29–31.) The scope of all these passages is, that we must not entertain any opinion whatever of our own strength, if we would enjoy the favour of God, who “resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble,” (James iv. 6.) Then let us call to mind such promises as these, “I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground,” (Is. xlv. 3;) “Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters,” (Is. lv. 1.) These passages declare, that none are admitted to enjoy the blessings of God save those who are pining under a sense of their own poverty. Nor ought such passages as the following to be omitted: “The sun shall no more be thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory,” (Is. lx. 19.) The Lord certainly does not deprive his servants of the light of the sun or moon, but as he would alone appear glorious in them, he dissuades them from confidence even in those objects which they deem most excellent.

11. I have always been exceedingly delighted with the words of Chrysostom, “The foundation of our philosophy is humility;”<sup>1</sup> and still more with those of Augustine, “As the orator,<sup>2</sup> when asked, What is the first precept in eloquence? answered, Delivery: What is the second? Delivery: What the third? Delivery: so, if you ask me in regard to the precepts of the Christian Religion, I will answer, first, second, and third, Humility.” By humility, he means not when a man, with a consciousness of some virtue, refrains from

<sup>1</sup> Chrysost. Homil. de Perf. Evang. August. Epist. 56, ad Discrur. As to true humility, see *infra*, chap. vii. sec. 4, and lib. iii. c. 12, sec. 6, 7.

<sup>2</sup> The French is, “Demosthene orateur Grec;”—the Greek orator Demosthenes.

pride, but when he truly feels that he has no refuge but in humility. This is clear from another passage,<sup>1</sup> "Let no man," says he, "flatter himself: of himself he is a devil: his happiness he owes entirely to God. What have you of your own but sin? Take your sin which is your own; for righteousness is of God." Again, "Why presume so much on the capability of nature? It is wounded, maimed, vexed, lost. The thing wanted is genuine confession, not false defence." "When any one knows that he is nothing in himself, and has no help from himself, the weapons within himself are broken, and the war is ended." All the weapons of impiety must be bruised, and broken, and burnt in the fire; you must remain unarmed, having no help in yourself. The more infirm you are, the more the Lord will sustain you. So, in expounding the seventieth Psalm, he forbids us to remember our own righteousness, in order that we may recognise the righteousness of God, and shows that God bestows his grace upon us, that we may know that we are nothing; that we stand only by the mercy of God, seeing that in ourselves we are altogether wicked. Let us not contend with God for our right, as if anything attributed to him were lost to our salvation. As our insignificance is his exaltation, so the confession of our insignificance has its remedy provided in his mercy. I do not ask, however, that man should voluntarily yield without being convinced, or that, if he has any powers, he should shut his eyes to them, that he may thus be subdued to true humility; but that getting quit of the disease of self-love and ambition, *φιλαυτία καὶ φιλονεικία*, under the blinding influences of which he thinks of himself more highly than he ought to think, he may see himself as he really is, by looking into the faithful mirror of Scripture.

12. I feel pleased with the well-known saying which has been borrowed from the writings of Augustine, that man's natural gifts were corrupted by sin, and his supernatural gifts withdrawn; meaning by supernatural gifts the light of faith and righteousness, which would have been sufficient for the

<sup>1</sup> August. Homil. in Joann. 49, lib. de Natura et Gratia, cap. lii.; and in Psalms xlv. et lxx.



attainment of heavenly life and everlasting felicity. Man, when he withdrew his allegiance to God, was deprived of the spiritual gifts by which he had been raised to the hope of eternal salvation. Hence it follows, that he is now an exile from the kingdom of God, so that all things which pertain to the blessed life of the soul are extinguished in him until he recover them by the grace of regeneration. Among these are faith, love to God, charity towards our neighbour, the study of righteousness and holiness. All these, when restored to us by Christ, are to be regarded as adventitious and above nature. If so, we infer that they were previously abolished. On the other hand, soundness of mind and integrity of heart were, at the same time, withdrawn, and it is this which constitutes the corruption of natural gifts. For although there is still some residue of intelligence and judgment as well as will, we cannot call a mind sound and entire which is both weak and immersed in darkness. As to the will, its depravity is but too well known. Therefore, since reason, by which man discerns between good and evil, and by which he understands and judges, is a natural gift, it could not be entirely destroyed; but being partly weakened and partly corrupted, a shapeless ruin is all that remains. In this sense it is said, (John i. 5,) that "the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not;" these words clearly expressing both points, viz., that in the perverted and degenerate nature of man there are still some sparks which show that he is a rational animal, and differs from the brutes, inasmuch as he is endued with intelligence, and yet, that this light is so smothered by clouds of darkness that it cannot shine forth to any good effect. In like manner, the will, because inseparable from the nature of man, did not perish, but was so enslaved by depraved lusts as to be incapable of one righteous desire. The definition now given is complete, but there are several points which require to be explained. Therefore, proceeding agreeably to that primary distinction, (Book I. c. xv. sec. 7 and 8,) by which we divided the soul into intellect and will, we will now inquire into the power of the intellect.

To charge the intellect with perpetual blindness, so as to



leave it no intelligence of any description whatever, is repugnant not only to the Word of God, but to common experience. We see that there has been implanted in the human mind a certain desire of investigating truth, to which it never would aspire unless some relish for truth antecedently existed. There is, therefore, now, in the human mind, discernment to this extent, that it is naturally influenced by the love of truth, the neglect of which in the lower animals is a proof of their gross and irrational nature. Still it is true that this love of truth fails before it reaches the goal, forthwith falling away into vanity. As the human mind is unable, from dulness, to pursue the right path of investigation, and, after various wanderings, stumbling every now and then like one groping in darkness, at length gets completely bewildered, so its whole procedure proves how unfit it is to search the truth and find it. Then it labours under another grievous defect, in that it frequently fails to discern what the knowledge is which it should study to acquire. Hence, under the influence of a vain curiosity, it torments itself with superfluous and useless discussions, either not advertng at all to the things necessary to be known, or casting only a cursory and contemptuous glance at them. At all events, it scarcely ever studies them in sober earnest. Profane writers are constantly complaining of this perverse procedure, and yet almost all of them are found pursuing it. Hence Solomon, throughout the Book of Ecclesiastes, after enumerating all the studies in which men think they attain the highest wisdom, pronounces them vain and frivolous.

13. Still, however, man's efforts are not always so utterly fruitless as not to lead to some result, especially when his attention is directed to inferior objects. Nay, even with regard to superior objects, though he is more careless in investigating them, he makes some little progress. Here, however, his ability is more limited, and he is never made more sensible of his weakness than when he attempts to soar above the sphere of the present life. It may therefore be proper, in order to make it more manifest how far our ability extends in regard to these two classes of objects, to draw a distinction between them. The distinction is, that we have

one kind of intelligence of earthly things, and another of heavenly things. By earthly things, I mean those which relate not to God and his kingdom, to true righteousness and future blessedness, but have some connection with the present life, and are in a manner confined within its boundaries. By heavenly things, I mean the pure knowledge of God, the method of true righteousness, and the mysteries of the heavenly kingdom. To the former belong matters of policy and economy, all mechanical arts and liberal studies. To the latter (as to which, see the eighteenth and following sections) belong the knowledge of God and of his will, and the means of framing the life in accordance with them. As to the former, the view to be taken is this: Since man is by nature a social animal, he is disposed, from natural instinct, to cherish and preserve society; and accordingly we see that the minds of all men have impressions of civil order and honesty. Hence it is that every individual understands how human societies must be regulated by laws, and also is able to comprehend the principles of those laws. Hence the universal agreement in regard to such subjects, both among nations and individuals, the seeds of them being implanted in the breasts of all without a teacher or lawgiver. The truth of this fact is not affected by the wars and dissensions which immediately arise, while some, such as thieves and robbers, would invert the rules of justice, loosen the bonds of law, and give free scope to their lust; and while others (a vice of most frequent occurrence) deem that to be unjust which is elsewhere regarded as just, and, on the contrary, hold that to be praiseworthy which is elsewhere forbidden. For such persons do not hate the laws from not knowing that they are good and sacred, but, inflamed with headlong passion, quarrel with what is clearly reasonable, and licentiously hate what their mind and understanding approve. Quarrels of this latter kind do not destroy the primary idea of justice. For while men dispute with each other as to particular enactments, their ideas of equity agree in substance. This, no doubt, proves the weakness of the human mind, which, even when it seems on the right path, halts and hesitates. Still, however, it is true, that some principle of

civil order is impressed on all. And this is ample proof, that, in regard to the constitution of the present life, no man is devoid of the light of reason.

14. Next come manual and liberal arts, in learning which, as all have some degree of aptitude, the full force of human acuteness is displayed. But though all are not equally able to learn all the arts, we have sufficient evidence of a common capacity in the fact, that there is scarcely an individual who does not display intelligence in some particular art. And this capacity extends not merely to the learning of the art, but to the devising of something new, or the improving of what had been previously learned. This led Plato to adopt the erroneous idea, that such knowledge was nothing but recollection.<sup>1</sup> So cogently does it oblige us to acknowledge that its principle is naturally implanted in the human mind. But while these proofs openly attest the fact of an universal reason and intelligence naturally implanted, this universality is of a kind which should lead every individual for himself to recognize it as a special gift of God. To this gratitude we have a sufficient call from the Creator himself, when, in the case of idiots, he shows what the endowments of the soul would be were it not pervaded with his light. Though natural to all, it is so in such a sense that it ought to be regarded as a gratuitous gift of his beneficence to each. Moreover, the invention, the methodical arrangement, and the more thorough and superior knowledge of the arts, being confined to a few individuals, cannot be regarded as a solid proof of common shrewdness. Still, however, as they are bestowed indiscriminately on the good and the bad, they are justly classed among natural endowments.

15. Therefore, in reading profane authors, the admirable light of truth displayed in them should remind us, that the human mind, however much fallen and perverted from its original integrity, is still adorned and invested with admirable gifts from its Creator. If we reflect that the Spirit of God is the only fountain of truth, we will be careful, as we would avoid

<sup>1</sup> The French adds, "de ce que l'ame savoit avant qu'etre mis dedans le corps;"—of what the soul knew before it was placed within the body.



offering insult to him, not to reject or condemn truth wherever it appears. In despising the gifts, we insult the Giver. How, then, can we deny that truth must have beamed on those ancient lawgivers who arranged civil order and discipline with so much equity? Shall we say that the philosophers, in their exquisite researches and skilful description of nature, were blind? Shall we deny the possession of intellect to those who drew up rules for discourse, and taught us to speak in accordance with reason? Shall we say that those who, by the cultivation of the medical art, expended their industry in our behalf, were only raving? What shall we say of the mathematical sciences? Shall we deem them to be the dreams of madmen? Nay, we cannot read the writings of the ancients on these subjects without the highest admiration; an admiration which their excellence will not allow us to withhold. But shall we deem anything to be noble and praiseworthy, without tracing it to the hand of God? Far from us be such ingratitude; an ingratitude not chargeable even on heathen poets, who acknowledged that philosophy and laws, and all useful arts, were the inventions of the gods. Therefore, since it is manifest that men whom the Scriptures term *carnal*, are so acute and clear-sighted in the investigation of inferior things, their example should teach us how many gifts the Lord has left in possession of human nature, notwithstanding of its having been despoiled of the true good.

16. Moreover, let us not forget that there are most excellent blessings which the Divine Spirit dispenses to whom he will for the common benefit of mankind. For if the skill and knowledge required for the construction of the Tabernacle behoved to be imparted to Bezaleel and Aholiab, by the Spirit of God, (Exod. xxxi. 2; xxxv. 30,) it is not strange that the knowledge of those things which are of the highest excellence in human life is said to be communicated to us by the Spirit. Nor is there any ground for asking what concourse the Spirit can have with the ungodly, who are altogether alienated from God? For what is said as to the Spirit dwelling in believers only, is to be understood of the Spirit of holiness, by which we are consecrated to God as

temples. Notwithstanding of this, He fills, moves, and invigorates all things by the virtue of the Spirit, and that according to the peculiar nature which each class of beings has received by the Law of Creation. But if the Lord has been pleased to assist us by the work and ministry of the ungodly in physics, dialectics, mathematics, and other similar sciences, let us avail ourselves of it, lest, by neglecting the gifts of God spontaneously offered to us, we be justly punished for our sloth. Lest any one, however, should imagine a man to be very happy merely because, with reference to the elements of this world, he has been endued with great talents for the investigation of truth, we ought to add, that the whole power of intellect thus bestowed is, in the sight of God, fleeting and vain whenever it is not based on a solid foundation of truth. Augustine, (*supra*, sec. 4 and 12,) to whom, as we have observed, the Master of Sentences, (Lib. ii. Dist. 25,) and the Schoolmen, are forced to subscribe, says most correctly, that as the gratuitous gifts bestowed on man were withdrawn, so the natural gifts which remained were corrupted after the fall. Not that they can be polluted in themselves in so far as they proceed from God, but that they have ceased to be pure to polluted man, lest he should by their means obtain any praise.

17. The sum of the whole is this: From a general survey of the human race, it appears that one of the essential properties of our nature is reason, which distinguishes us from the lower animals, just as these by means of sense are distinguished from inanimate objects. For although some individuals are born without reason, that defect does not impair the general kindness of God, but rather serves to remind us, that whatever we retain ought justly to be ascribed to the Divine indulgence. Had God not so spared us, our revolt would have carried along with it the entire destruction of nature. In that some excel in acuteness, and some in judgment, while others have greater readiness in learning some peculiar art, God, by this variety, commends his favour toward us, lest any one should presume to arrogate to himself that which flows from His mere liberality. For whence is it that one is more excellent than another,

but that in a common nature the grace of God is specially displayed in passing by many, and thus proclaiming that it is under obligation to none. We may add, that each individual is brought under particular influences according to his calling. Many examples of this occur in the Book of Judges, in which the Spirit of the Lord is said to have come upon those whom he called to govern his people, (Judges vi. 34.) In short, in every distinguished act there is a special inspiration. Thus it is said of Saul, that "there went with him a band of men whose hearts the Lord had touched," (1 Sam. x. 26.) And when his inauguration to the kingdom is foretold, Samuel thus addresses him, "The Spirit of the Lord will come upon thee, and thou shalt prophesy with them, and shalt be turned into another man," (1 Sam. x. 6.) This extends to the whole course of government, as it is afterwards said of David, "The Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward," (1 Sam. xvi. 13.) The same thing is elsewhere said with reference to particular movements. Nay, even in Homer, men are said to excel in genius, not only according as Jupiter has distributed to each, but according as he leads them day by day, *οἷον ἐπ' ἡμερᾶς ἀγγῆσι*. And certainly experience shows when those who were most skilful and ingenious stand stupified, that the minds of men are entirely under the control of God, who rules them every moment. Hence it is said, that "He poureth contempt upon princes, and causeth them to wander in the wilderness where there is no way," (Ps. cvii. 40.) Still, in this diversity we can trace some remains of the divine image distinguishing the whole human race from other creatures.

18. We must now explain what the power of human reason is, in regard to the kingdom of God, and spiritual discernment, which consists chiefly of three things—the knowledge of God, the knowledge of his paternal favour towards us, which constitutes our salvation, and the method of regulating of our conduct in accordance with the Divine Law. With regard to the former two, but more properly the second, men otherwise the most ingenious are blinder than moles. I deny not, indeed, that in the writings of philosophers we meet occasionally with shrewd and apposite remarks on the



nature of God, though they invariably savour somewhat of giddy imagination. As observed above, the Lord has bestowed on them some slight perception of his Godhead, that they might not plead ignorance as an excuse for their impiety, and has, at times, instigated them to deliver some truths, the confession of which should be their own condemnation. Still, though seeing, they saw not. Their discernment was not such as to direct them to the truth, far less to enable them to attain it, but resembled that of the bewildered traveller, who sees the flash of lightning glance far and wide for a moment, and then vanish into the darkness of the night, before he can advance a single step. So far is such assistance from enabling him to find the right path. Besides, how many monstrous falsehoods intermingle with those minute particles of truth scattered up and down in their writings as if by chance. In short, not one of them even made the least approach to that assurance of the divine favour, without which the mind of man must ever remain a mere chaos of confusion. To the great truths, What God is in himself, and what he is in relation to us, human reason makes not the least approach. (See Book III. c. ii. sec. 14, 15, 16.)

19. But since we are intoxicated with a false opinion of our own discernment, and can scarcely be persuaded that in divine things it is altogether stupid and blind, I believe the best course will be to establish the fact, not by argument, but by Scripture. Most admirable to this effect is the passage which I lately quoted from John, when he says, "In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not," (John i. 4, 5.) He intimates that the human soul is indeed irradiated with a beam of divine light, so that it is never left utterly devoid of some small flame, or rather spark, though not such as to enable it to comprehend God. And why so? Because its acuteness is, in reference to the knowledge of God, mere blindness. When the Spirit describes men under the term *darkness*, he declares them void of all power of spiritual intelligence. For this reason, it is said that believers, in embracing Christ, are "born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of

God," (John i. 13;) in other words, that the flesh has no capacity for such sublime wisdom as to apprehend God, and the things of God, unless illumined by His Spirit. In like manner our Saviour, when he was acknowledged by Peter, declared that it was by special revelation from the Father, (Matth. xvi. 17.)

20. If we were persuaded of a truth which ought to be beyond dispute, viz., that human nature possesses none of the gifts which the elect receive from their heavenly Father through the Spirit of regeneration, there would be no room here for hesitation. For thus speaks the congregation of the faithful, by the mouth of the prophet: "With thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light," (Ps. xxxvi. 9.) To the same effect is the testimony of the Apostle Paul, when he declares, that "no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost," (1 Cor. xii. 3.) And John Baptist, on seeing the dulness of his disciples, exclaims, "A man can receive nothing, unless it be given him from heaven," (John iii. 27.) That the gift to which he here refers must be understood not of ordinary natural gifts, but of special illumination, appears from this—that he was complaining how little his disciples had profited by all that he had said to them in commendation of Christ. "I see," says he, "that my words are of no effect in imbuing the minds of men with divine things, unless the Lord enlighten their understandings by His Spirit." Nay, Moses also, while upbraiding the people for their forgetfulness, at the same time observes, that they could not become wise in the mysteries of God without his assistance. "Ye have seen all that the Lord did before your eyes in the land of Egypt, unto Pharaoh, and unto all his servants, and unto all his land; the great temptations which thine eyes have seen, the signs, and these great miracles: yet the Lord hath not given you an heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day," (Deut. xxix. 2, 3, 4.) Would the expression have been stronger had he called us mere blocks in regard to the contemplation of divine things? Hence the Lord, by the mouth of the Prophet, promises to the Israelites as a singular favour, "I will give them an heart to know me," (Jer.

xxiv. 7 ;) intimating, that in spiritual things the human mind is wise only in so far as He enlightens it. This was also clearly confirmed by our Saviour when he said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him," (John vi. 44.) Nay, is not he himself the living image of his Father, in which the full brightness of his glory is manifested to us? Therefore, how far our faculty of knowing God extends could not be better shown than when it is declared, that though his image is so plainly exhibited, we have not eyes to perceive it. What? Did not Christ descend into the world that he might make the will of his Father manifest to men, and did he not faithfully perform the office? True! He did; but nothing is accomplished by his preaching unless the inner teacher, the Spirit, open the way into our minds. Only those, therefore, come to him who have heard and learned of the Father. And in what is the method of this hearing and learning? It is when the Spirit, with a wondrous and special energy, forms the ear to hear and the mind to understand. Lest this should seem new, our Saviour refers to the prophecy of Isaiah, which contains a promise of the renovation of the Church. "For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee," (Is. liv. 7.) If the Lord here predicts some special blessing to his elect, it is plain that the teaching to which he refers is not that which is common to them with the ungodly and profane.

It thus appears that none can enter the kingdom of God save those whose minds have been renewed by the enlightening of the Holy Spirit. On this subject the clearest exposition is given by Paul, who, when expressly handling it, after condemning the whole wisdom of the world as foolishness and vanity, and thereby declaring man's utter destitution, thus concludes, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned," (1 Cor. ii. 14.) Whom does he mean by the "natural man"? The man who trusts to the light of nature. Such a man has no understanding in the spiritual mysteries of God. Why so? Is it because through sloth he neglects them?



Nay, though he exert himself, it is of no avail; they are "spiritually discerned." And what does this mean? That altogether hidden from human discernment, they are made known only by the revelation of the Spirit; so that they are accounted foolishness wherever the Spirit does not give light. The Apostle had previously declared, that "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him;" nay, that the wisdom of the world is a kind of veil by which the mind is prevented from beholding God, (1 Cor. ii. 9.) What would we more? The Apostle declares that God hath "made foolish the wisdom of this world," (1 Cor. i. 20;) and shall we attribute to it an acuteness capable of penetrating to God, and the hidden mysteries of his kingdom? Far from us be such presumption!

21. What the Apostle here denies to man, he, in another place, ascribes to God alone, when he prays, "that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation," (Eph. i. 17.) You now hear that all wisdom and revelation is the gift of God. What follows? "The eyes of your understanding being enlightened." Surely, if they require a new enlightening, they must in themselves be blind. The next words are, "that ye may know what is the hope of his calling," (Eph. i. 18.) In other words, the minds of men have not capacity enough to know their calling. Let no prating Pelagian here allege that God obviates this rudeness or stupidity, when, by the doctrine of his word, he directs us to a path which we could not have found without a guide. David had the law, comprehending in it all the wisdom that could be desired, and yet not contented with this, he prays, "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law," (Ps. cxix. 18.) By this expression, he certainly intimates, that it is like sunrise to the earth when the word of God shines forth; but that men do not derive much benefit from it until he himself, who is for this reason called the Father of lights, (James i. 17,) either gives eyes or opens them; because, whatever is not illuminated by his Spirit is wholly darkness. The Apostles had been duly and amply

instructed by the best of teachers. Still, as they wanted the Spirit of truth to complete their education in the very doctrine which they had previously heard, they were ordered to wait for him, (John xiv. 26.) If we confess that what we ask of God is lacking to us, and He by the very thing promised intimates our want, no man can hesitate to acknowledge that he is able to understand the mysteries of God, only in so far as illuminated by his grace. He who ascribes to himself more understanding than this, is the blinder for not acknowledging his blindness.

22. It remains to consider the third branch of the knowledge of spiritual things, viz., the method of properly regulating the conduct. This is correctly termed the knowledge of the works of righteousness, a branch in which the human mind seems to have somewhat more discernment than in the former two, since an Apostle declares, "When the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean time accusing or else excusing one another," (Rom. ii. 14, 15.) If the Gentiles have the righteousness of the law naturally engraven on their minds, we certainly cannot say that they are altogether blind as to the rule of life. Nothing, indeed, is more common, than for man to be sufficiently instructed in a right course of conduct by natural law, of which the Apostle here speaks. Let us consider, however, for what end this knowledge of the law was given to men. For from this it will forthwith appear how far it can conduct them in the way of reason and truth. This is even plain from the words of Paul, if we attend to their arrangement. He had said a little before, that those who had sinned in the law will be judged by the law; and those who have sinned without the law will perish without the law. As it might seem unaccountable that the Gentiles should perish without any previous judgment, he immediately subjoins, that conscience served them instead of the law, and was therefore sufficient for their righteous condemnation. The end of the natural law, therefore, is to render

man inexcusable, and may be not improperly defined—the judgment of conscience distinguishing sufficiently between just and unjust, and by convicting men on their own testimony, depriving them of all pretext for ignorance. So indulgent is man toward himself, that, while doing evil, he always endeavours as much as he can to suppress the idea of sin. It was this, apparently, which induced Plato (in his Protagoras) to suppose that sins were committed only through ignorance. There might be some ground for this, if hypocrisy were so successful in hiding vice as to keep the conscience clear in the sight of God. But since the sinner, when trying to evade the judgment of good and evil implanted in him, is ever and anon dragged forward, and not permitted to wink so effectually as not to be compelled at times, whether he will or not, to open his eyes, it is false to say that he sins only through ignorance.

23. Themistius is more accurate in teaching, (Paraphr. in Lib. iii. de Anima, cap. xlv.,) that the intellect is very seldom mistaken in the general definition or essence of the matter; but that deception begins as it advances farther, namely, when it descends to particulars. That homicide, putting the case in the abstract, is an evil, no man will deny; and yet one who is conspiring the death of his enemy deliberates on it as if the thing was good. The adulterer will condemn adultery in the abstract, and yet flatter himself while privately committing it. The ignorance lies here: that man, when he comes to the particular, forgets the rule which he had laid down in the general case. Augustine treats most admirably on this subject in his exposition of the first verse of the fifty-seventh Psalm. The doctrine of Themistius, however, does not always hold true: for the turpitude of the crime sometimes presses so on the conscience, that the sinner does not impose upon himself by a false semblance of good, but rushes into sin knowingly and willingly. Hence the expression,—I see the better course, and approve it: I follow the worse, (Medea of Ovid.) For this reason, Aristotle seems to me to have made a very shrewd distinction between incontinence and intemperance, (Ethic. Lib. vii. cap. iii.) Where incontinence (ἀκρασία) reigns, he says, that through



the passion (*πάθος*) particular knowledge is suppressed : so that the individual sees not in his own misdeed the evil which he sees generally in similar cases ; but when the passion is over, repentance immediately succeeds. Intemperance, (*απολασία*,) again, is not extinguished or diminished by a sense of sin, but, on the contrary, persists in the evil choice which it has once made.

24. Moreover, when you hear of an universal judgment in man distinguishing between good and evil, you must not suppose that this judgment is, in every respect, sound and entire. For if the hearts of men are imbued with a sense of justice and injustice, in order that they may have no pretext to allege ignorance, it is by no means necessary for this purpose that they should discern the truth in particular cases. It is even more than sufficient if they understand so far as to be unable to practise evasion without being convicted by their own conscience, and beginning even now to tremble at the judgment-seat of God. Indeed, if we would test our reason by the Divine Law, which is a perfect standard of righteousness, we should find how blind it is in many respects. It certainly attains not to the principal heads in the First Table, such as, trust in God, the ascription to him of all praise in virtue and righteousness, the invocation of his name, and the true observance of his day of rest. Did ever any soul, under the guidance of natural sense, imagine that these and the like constitute the legitimate worship of God ? When profane men would worship God, how often soever they may be drawn off from their vain trifling, they constantly relapse into it. They admit, indeed, that sacrifices are not pleasing to God, unless accompanied with sincerity of mind ; and by this they testify that they have some conception of spiritual worship, though they immediately pervert it by false devices : for it is impossible to persuade them that every thing which the law enjoins on the subject is true. Shall I then extol the discernment of a mind which can neither acquire wisdom by itself, nor listen to advice ?<sup>1</sup> As to the precepts of the

<sup>1</sup> The French adds, "Or l'entendement humain a été tel en cest endroit. Nous appercevons donques qu'il est du tout stupide ;" now, the understanding has proved so in this matter. We see, therefore, that it is quite stupid.

Second Table, there is considerably more knowledge of them, inasmuch as they are more closely connected with the preservation of civil society. Even here, however, there is something defective. Every man of understanding deems it most absurd to submit to unjust and tyrannical domination, provided it can by any means be thrown off, and there is but one opinion among men, that it is the part of an abject and servile mind to bear it patiently, the part of an honourable and high-spirited mind to rise up against it. Indeed, the revenge of injuries is not regarded by philosophers as a vice. But the Lord condemning this too lofty spirit, prescribes to his people that patience which mankind deem infamous. In regard to the general observance of the law, concupiscence altogether escapes our animadversion. For the natural man cannot bear to recognise diseases in his lusts. The light of nature is stifled sooner than take the first step into this profound abyss. For, when philosophers class immoderate movements of the mind among vices, they mean those which break forth and manifest themselves in grosser forms. Depraved desires, in which the mind can quietly indulge, they regard as nothing, (see *infra*, chap. viii. sect. 49.)

25. As we have above animadverted on Plato's error, in ascribing all sins to ignorance, so we must repudiate the opinion of those who hold that all sins proceed from preconceived pravity and malice. We know too well from experience how often we fall, even when our intention is good. Our reason is exposed to so many forms of delusion, is liable to so many errors, stumbles on so many obstacles, is entangled by so many snares, that it is ever wandering from the right direction. Of how little value it is in the sight of God, in regard to all the parts of life, Paul shows, when he says, that we are not "sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves," (2 Cor. iii. 5.) He is not speaking of the will or affection; he denies us the power of thinking aright how any thing can be duly performed. Is it, indeed, true, that all thought, intelligence, discernment, and industry, are so defective, that, in the sight of the Lord, we cannot think or aim at any thing that is right? To us, who can scarcely bear to part with acuteness of intellect, (in our estimation a

most precious endowment,) it seems hard to admit this, whereas it is regarded as most just by the Holy Spirit, who "knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity," (Ps. xciv. 11,) and distinctly declares, that "every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually," (Gen. vi. 5; viii. 21.) If every thing which our mind conceives, meditates, plans, and resolves, is always evil, how can it ever think of doing what is pleasing to God, to whom righteousness and holiness alone are acceptable? It is thus plain, that our mind, in what direction soever it turns, is miserably exposed to vanity. David was conscious of its weakness when he prayed, "Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law," (Ps. cxix. 34.) By desiring to obtain a new understanding, he intimates that his own was by no means sufficient. This he does not once only, but in one psalm repeats the same prayer almost ten times, the repetition intimating how strong the necessity which urged him to pray. What he thus asked for himself alone, Paul prays for the churches in general. "For this cause," says he, "we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that you might walk worthy of the Lord," &c., (Col. i. 9, 10.) Whenever he represents this as a blessing from God, we should remember that he at the same time testifies that it is not in the power of man. Accordingly, Augustine, in speaking of this inability of human reason to understand the things of God, says, that he deems the grace of illumination not less necessary to the mind than the light of the sun to the eye, (*August. de Peccat. Merit. et Remiss.* lib. ii. cap. v.) And, not content with this, he modifies his expression, adding, that we open our eyes to behold the light, whereas the mental eye remains shut, until it is opened by the Lord. Nor does Scripture say that our minds are illuminated in a single day, so as afterwards to see of themselves. The passage, which I lately quoted from the Apostle Paul, refers to continual progress and increase. David, too, expresses this distinctly in these words: "With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments," (Ps. cxix. 10.) Though he had



been regenerated, and so had made no ordinary progress in true piety, he confesses that he stood in need of direction every moment, in order that he might not decline from the knowledge with which he had been endued. Hence, he elsewhere prays for a renewal of a right spirit, which he had lost by his sin,<sup>1</sup> (Ps. li. 12.) For that which God gave at first, while temporarily withdrawn, it is equally his province to restore.

26. We must now examine the will, on which the question of freedom principally turns, the power of choice belonging to it rather than the intellect, as we have already seen, (*supra*, sect. 4.) And at the outset, to guard against its being thought that the doctrine taught by philosophers, and generally received, viz., that all things by natural instinct have a desire of good, is any proof of the rectitude of the human will,—let us observe, that the power of free will is not to be considered in any of those desires which proceed more from instinct than mental deliberation. Even the schoolmen admit, (*Thomas*, Part I., *Quæst.* 83, art. 3,) that there is no act of free will, unless when reason looks at opposites. By this they mean, that the things desired must be such as may be made the object of choice, and that to pave the way for choice, deliberation must precede. And, undoubtedly, if you attend to what this natural desire of good in man is, you will find that it is common to him with the brutes. They, too, desire what is good; and when any semblance of good capable of moving the sense appears, they follow after it. Here, however, man does not, in accordance with the excellence of his immortal nature, rationally choose, and studiously pursue, what is truly for his good. He does not admit reason to his counsel, nor exert his intellect; but without reason, without counsel, follows the bent of his nature like the lower animals. The question of freedom, therefore, has nothing to do with the fact of man's being led by natural instinct to desire good. The question is, Does man, after determining by right reason what is good, choose what he thus knows, and pursue

<sup>1</sup> Calvin, in his Commentary on the passage, says, "Lost in part or appearance, or deserved to lose."

what he thus chooses? Lest any doubt should be entertained as to this, we must attend to the double misnomer. For this *appetite* is not properly a movement of the will, but natural inclination; and this *good* is not one of virtue or righteousness, but of condition, viz., that the individual may feel comfortable. In fine, how much soever man may desire to obtain what is good, he does not follow it. There is no man who would not be pleased with eternal blessedness; and yet, without the impulse of the Spirit, no man aspires to it. Since, then, the natural desire of happiness in man no more proves the freedom of the will, than the tendency in metals and stones to attain the perfection of their nature, let us consider, in other respects, whether the will is so utterly vitiated and corrupted in every part as to produce nothing but evil, or whether it retains some portion uninjured, and productive of good desires.

27. Those who ascribe our willing effectually, to the primary grace of God, (*supra*, sect. 6,) seem conversely to insinuate that the soul has in itself a power of aspiring to good, though a power too feeble to rise to solid affection or active endeavour. There is no doubt that this opinion, adopted from Origen and certain of the ancient Fathers, has been generally embraced by the schoolmen, who are wont to apply to man in his natural state (*in puris naturalibus*, as they express it) the following description of the apostle:—"For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I." "To will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not," (Rom. vii. 15, 18.) But, in this way, the whole scope of Paul's discourse is inverted. He is speaking of the Christian struggle, (touched on more briefly in the Epistle to the Galatians,) which believers constantly experience from the conflict between the flesh and the Spirit. But the Spirit is not from nature, but from regeneration. That the apostle is speaking of the regenerate is apparent from this, that after saying, "in me dwells no good thing," he immediately adds the explanation, "in my flesh." Accordingly, he declares, "It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." What is the meaning of the correction, "in me, (that is, in

my flesh?") It is just as if he had spoken in this way, No good thing dwells in me, of myself, for in my flesh nothing good can be found. Hence follows the species of excuse, It is not I myself that do evil, but sin that dwelleth in me. This applies to none but the regenerate, who, with the leading powers of the soul, tend towards what is good. The whole is made plain by the conclusion, "I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind," (Rom. vii. 22, 23.) Who has this struggle in himself, save those who, regenerated by the Spirit of God, bear about with them the remains of the flesh? Accordingly, Augustine, who had at one time thought that the discourse related to the natural man, (August. ad Bonifac. Lib. i. c. 10,) afterwards retracted his exposition as unsound and inconsistent. And, indeed, if we admit that men, without grace, have any motions to good, however feeble, what answer shall we give to the apostle, who declares that "we are incapable of thinking a good thought?" (2 Cor. iii. 5.) What answer shall we give to the Lord, who declares, by Moses, that "every imagination of man's heart is only evil continually?" (Gen. viii. 21.) Since the blunder has thus arisen from an erroneous view of a single passage, it seems unnecessary to dwell upon it. Let us rather give due weight to our Saviour's words, "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin," (John viii. 34.) We are all sinners by nature, therefore we are held under the yoke of sin. But if the whole man is subject to the dominion of sin, surely the will, which is its principal seat, must be bound with the closest chains. And, indeed, if divine grace were preceded by any will of ours, Paul could not have said that "it is God which worketh in us both to will and to do," (Philip. ii. 13.) Away, then, with all the absurd trifling which many have indulged in with regard to preparation. Although believers sometimes ask to have their heart trained to the obedience of the divine law, as David does in several passages, (Ps. li. 12,) it is to be observed, that even this longing in prayer is from God. This is apparent from the language used. When he prays, "Create in me a clean heart," he certainly



does not attribute the beginning of the creation to himself. Let us therefore rather adopt the sentiment of Augustine, "God will prevent you in all things, but do you sometimes prevent his anger. How? Confess that you have all these things from God, that all the good you have is from him, all the evil from yourself," (August. De Verbis Apost. Serm. 10.) Shortly after he says, "Of our own we have nothing but sin."

## CHAPTER III.

EVERY THING PROCEEDING FROM THE CORRUPT NATURE OF  
MAN DAMNABLE.

The principal matters in this chapter are,—I. A recapitulation of the former chapter, proving, from passages of Scripture, that the intellect and will of man are so corrupted, that no integrity, no knowledge or fear of God, can now be found in him, sect. 1 and 2. II. Objections to this doctrine, from the virtues which shone in some of the heathen, refuted, sect. 3 and 4. III. What kind of will remains in man, the slave of sin, sect. 5. The remedy and cure, sect. 6. IV. The opinion of Neo-Pelagian sophists concerning the preparation and efficacy of the will, and also concerning perseverance and co-operating grace, refuted, both by reason and Scripture, sect. 7–12. V. Some passages from Augustine confirming the truth of this doctrine, sect. 13 and 14.

*Sections.*

1. The intellect and will of the whole man corrupt. The term *flesh* applies not only to the sensual, but also to the higher part of the soul. This demonstrated from Scripture.
2. The heart also involved in corruption, and hence in no part of man can integrity, or knowledge or the fear of God, be found.
3. Objection, that some of the heathen were possessed of admirable endowments, and, therefore, that the nature of man is not entirely corrupt. Answer, Corruption is not entirely removed, but only inwardly restrained. Explanation of this answer.
4. Objection still urged, that the virtuous and vicious among the heathen must be put upon the same level, or the virtuous prove that human nature, properly cultivated, is not devoid of virtue. Answer, That these are not ordinary properties of human nature, but special gifts of God. These gifts defiled by ambition, and hence the actions proceeding from them, however esteemed by man, have no merit with God.
5. Though man has still the faculty of willing, there is no soundness in it. He falls under the bondage of sin necessarily, and yet voluntarily. Necessity must be distinguished from compulsion. The ancient Theologians acquainted with this necessity. Some passages condemning the vacillation of Lombard.

6. Conversion to God constitutes the remedy or soundness of the human will. This not only begun, but continued and completed; the beginning, continuance, and completion, being ascribed entirely to God. This proved by Ezekiel's description of the stony heart, and from other passages of Scripture.
7. Various Objections.—1. The will is converted by God, but, when once prepared, does its part in the work of conversion. Answer from Augustine. 2. Grace can do nothing without will, nor the will without grace. Answer. Grace itself produces will. God prevents the unwilling, making him willing, and follows up this preventing grace that he may not will in vain. Another answer gathered from various passages of Augustine.
8. Answer to the second Objection continued. No will inclining to good except in the elect. The cause of election out of man. Hence right will, as well as election, are from the good pleasure of God. The beginning of willing and doing well is of faith; faith again is the gift of God; and hence mere grace is the cause of our beginning to will well. This proved by Scripture.
9. Answer to second Objection continued. That good will is merely of grace proved by the prayers of saints. Three axioms—1. God does not prepare man's heart, so that he can afterwards do some good of himself, but every desire of rectitude, every inclination to study, and every effort to pursue it, is from Him. 2. This desire, study, and effort, do not stop short, but continue to effect. 3. This progress is constant. The believer perseveres to the end. A third Objection, and three answers to it.
10. A fourth Objection. Answer. Fifth Objection. Answer. Answer confirmed by many passages of Scripture, and supported by a passage from Augustine.
11. Perseverance not of ourselves, but of God. Objection. Two errors in the objection. Refutation of both.
12. An objection founded on the distinction of co-operating grace. Answer. Answer confirmed by the testimony of Augustine and Bernard.
13. Last part of the chapter, in which it is proved by many passages of Augustine, that he held the doctrine here taught.
14. An objection, representing Augustine at variance with himself and other Theologians, removed. A summary of Augustine's doctrine on free will.

1. THE nature of man, in both parts of his soul, (*viz.*, intellect and will,) cannot be better ascertained than by attending to the epithets applied to him in Scripture. If he is fully depicted (and it may easily be proved that he is) by the words of our Saviour, "that which is born of the flesh is



flesh," (John iii. 6,) he must be a very miserable creature. For, as an apostle declares, "to be carnally minded is death," (Rom. viii. 8,) "It is enmity against God, and is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Is it true that the flesh is so perverse, that it is perpetually striving with all its might against God? that it cannot accord with the righteousness of the divine law? that, in short, it can beget nothing but the materials of death? Grant that there is nothing in human nature but flesh, and then extract something good out of it if you can. But it will be said, that the word *flesh* applies only to the sensual, and not to the higher part of the soul. This, however, is completely refuted by the words both of Christ and his apostle. The statement of our Lord is, that a man must be born again, because he is flesh. He requires not to be born again, with reference to the body. But a mind is not born again merely by having some portion of it reformed. It must be totally renewed. This is confirmed by the antithesis used in both passages. In the contrast between the Spirit and the flesh, there is nothing left of an intermediate nature. In this way, everything in man, which is not spiritual, falls under the denomination of carnal. But we have nothing of the Spirit except through regeneration. Everything, therefore, which we have from nature is flesh. Any possible doubt which might exist on the subject is removed by the words of Paul, (Eph. iv. 23,) where, after a description of the old man, who, he says, "is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts," he bids us "be renewed in the spirit" of our mind. You see that he places unlawful and depraved desires not in the sensual part merely, but in the mind itself, and therefore requires that it should be renewed. Indeed, he had a little before drawn a picture of human nature, which shows that there is no part in which it is not perverted and corrupted. For when he says that the "Gentiles walk in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart," (Eph. iv. 17, 18,) there can be no doubt that his words apply to all whom the Lord has not

yet formed anew both to wisdom and righteousness. This is rendered more clear by the comparison which immediately follows, and by which he reminds believers that they "have not so learned Christ;"—these words implying, that the grace of Christ is the only remedy for that blindness and its evil consequences. Thus, too, had Isaiah prophesied of the kingdom of Christ, when the Lord promised to the Church, that though darkness should "cover the earth, and gross darkness the people," yet that he should "arise" upon it, and "his glory" should be seen upon it, (Isaiah lx. 2.) When it is thus declared that divine light is to arise on the Church alone, all without the Church is left in blindness and darkness. I will not enumerate all that occurs throughout Scripture, and particularly in the Psalms and Prophetical writings, as to the vanity of man. There is much in what David says, "Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie: to be laid in the balance, they are altogether lighter than vanity," (Ps. lxii. 10.) The human mind receives a humbling blow when all the thoughts which proceed from it are derided as foolish, frivolous, perverse, and insane.

2. In no degree more lenient is the condemnation of the heart, when it is described as "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked," (Jer. xvii. 9.) But as I study brevity, I will be satisfied with a single passage, one, however, in which, as in a bright mirror, we may behold a complete image of our nature. The Apostle, when he would humble man's pride, uses these words: "There is none righteous, no, not one: there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: their feet are swift to shed blood: destruction and misery are in their ways: and the way of peace have they not known: there is no fear of God before their eyes," (Rom. iii. 10–18.) Thus he thunders not against certain individuals, but against the whole posterity

of Adam—not against the depraved manners of any single age, but the perpetual corruption of nature. His object in the passage is not merely to upbraid men in order that they may repent, but to teach that all are overwhelmed with inevitable calamity, and can be delivered from it only by the mercy of God. As this could not be proved without previously proving the overthrow and destruction of nature, he produced those passages to show that its ruin is complete.

Let it be a fixed point, then, that men are such as is here described, not by vicious custom, but by depravity of nature. The reasoning of the Apostle, that there is no salvation for man, save in the mercy of God, because in himself he is desperate and undone, could not otherwise stand. I will not here labour to prove that the passages apply, with the view of removing the doubts of any who might think them quoted out of place. I will take them as if they had been used by Paul for the first time, and not taken from the Prophets. First, then, he strips man of righteousness, that is, integrity and purity; and, secondly, he strips him of sound intelligence. He argues, that defect of intelligence is proved by apostacy from God. To seek Him is the beginning of wisdom, and, therefore, such defect must exist in all who have revolted from Him. He subjoins, that all have gone astray, and become as it were mere corruption; that there is none that doeth good. He then enumerates the crimes by which those who have once given loose to their wickedness pollute every member of their bodies. Lastly, he declares that they have no fear of God, according to whose rule all our steps should be directed. If these are the hereditary properties of the human race, it is vain to look for anything good in our nature. I confess, indeed, that all these iniquities do not break out in every individual. Still it cannot be denied that the hydra lurks in every breast. For as a body, while it contains and fosters the cause and matter of disease, cannot be called healthy, although pain is not actually felt; so a soul, while teeming with such seeds of vice, cannot be called sound. This similitude, however, does not apply throughout. In a body, however morbid, the functions of



life are performed; but the soul, when plunged into that deadly abyss, not only labours under vice, but is altogether devoid of good.

3. Here, again, we are met with a question very much the same as that which was previously solved. In every age there have been some who, under the guidance of nature, were all their lives devoted to virtue. It is of no consequence, that many blots may be detected in their conduct; by the mere study of virtue, they evinced that there was somewhat of purity in their nature. The value which virtues of this kind have in the sight of God will be considered more fully when we treat of the merit of works. Meanwhile, however, it will be proper to consider it in this place also, in so far as necessary for the exposition of the subject in hand. Such examples, then, seem to warn us against supposing that the nature of man is utterly vicious, since, under its guidance, some have not only excelled in illustrious deeds, but conducted themselves most honourably through the whole course of their lives. But we ought to consider, that, notwithstanding of the corruption of our nature, there is some room for divine grace, such grace as, without purifying it, may lay it under internal restraint. For, did the Lord let every mind loose to wanton in its lusts, doubtless there is not a man who would not show that his nature is capable of all the crimes with which Paul charges it, (Rom. iii. compared with Ps. xiv. 3, &c.) What? Can you exempt yourself from the number of those whose feet are swift to shed blood; whose hands are foul with rapine and murder; whose throats are like open sepulchres; whose tongues are deceitful; whose lips are venomous; whose actions are useless, unjust, rotten, deadly; whose soul is without God; whose inward parts are full of wickedness; whose eyes are on the watch for deception; whose minds are prepared for insult; whose every part, in short, is framed for endless deeds of wickedness? If every soul is capable of such abominations, (and the Apostle declares this boldly,) it is surely easy to see what the result would be, if the Lord were to permit human passion to follow its bent. No ravenous beast would rush so furiously, no stream, however rapid and violent, so impetuously burst its

banks. In the elect, God cures these diseases in the mode which will shortly be explained; in others, he only lays them under such restraint as may prevent them from breaking forth to a degree incompatible with the preservation of the established order of things. Hence, how much soever men may disguise their impurity, some are restrained only by shame, others by a fear of the laws, from breaking out into many kinds of wickedness. Some aspire to an honest life, as deeming it most conducive to their interest, while others are raised above the vulgar lot, that, by the dignity of their station, they may keep inferiors to their duty. Thus God, by his providence, curbs the perverseness of nature, preventing it from breaking forth into action, yet without rendering it inwardly pure.

4. The objection, however, is not yet solved. For we must either put Cataline on the same footing with Camillus, or hold Camillus to be an example that nature, when carefully cultivated, is not wholly void of goodness. I admit that the specious qualities which Camillus possessed were divine gifts, and appear entitled to commendation when viewed in themselves. But in what way will they be proofs of a virtuous nature? Must we not go back to the mind, and from it begin to reason thus? If a natural man possesses such integrity of manners, nature is not without the faculty of studying virtue. But what if his mind was depraved and perverted, and followed anything rather than rectitude? Such it undoubtedly was, if you grant that he was only a natural man. How then will you laud the power of human nature for good, if, even where there is the highest semblance of integrity, a corrupt bias is always detected? Therefore, as you would not commend a man for virtue whose vices impose upon you by a show of virtue, so you will not attribute a power of choosing rectitude to the human will while rooted in depravity, (see August. Lib. iv., Cont. Julian.) Still, the surest and easiest answer to the objection is, that those are not common endowments of nature, but special gifts of God, which he distributes in divers forms, and, in a definite measure, to men otherwise profane. For which reason, we hesitate not, in common language, to say, that one is of a

good, another of a vicious nature; though we cease not to hold that both are placed under the universal condition of human depravity. All we mean is, that God has conferred on the one a special grace which he has not seen it meet to confer on the other. When he was pleased to set Saul over the kingdom, he made him as it were a new man. This is the thing meant by Plato, when, alluding to a passage in the Iliad, he says, that the children of kings are distinguished at their birth by some special qualities—God, in kindness to the human race, often giving a spirit of heroism to those whom he destines for empire. In this way, the great leaders celebrated in history were formed. The same judgment must be given in the case of private individuals. But as those endued with the greatest talents were always impelled by the greatest ambition, (a stain which defiles all virtues, and makes them lose all favour in the sight of God,) so we cannot set any value on anything that seems praiseworthy in ungodly men. We may add, that the principal part of rectitude is wanting, when there is no zeal for the glory of God, and there is no such zeal in those whom he has not regenerated by his Spirit. Nor is it without good cause said in Isaiah, that on Christ should rest “the spirit of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord,” (Isa. xi. 2;) for by this we are taught that all who are strangers to Christ are destitute of that fear of God which is the beginning of wisdom, (Ps. cxi. 10.) The virtues which deceive us by an empty show may have their praise in civil society and the common intercourse of life, but before the judgment-seat of God they will be of no value to establish a claim of righteousness.

5. When the will is enchained as the slave of sin, it cannot make a movement towards goodness, far less steadily pursue it. Every such movement is the first step in that conversion to God, which in Scripture is entirely ascribed to divine grace. Thus Jeremiah prays, “Turn thou me, and I shall be turned,” (Jer. xxxi. 18.) Hence, too, in the same chapter, describing the spiritual redemption of believers, the Prophet says, “The Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he,” (Jer. xxxi. 11;) intimating how close the fetters are with



which the sinner is bound, so long as he is abandoned by the Lord, and acts under the yoke of the devil. Nevertheless, there remains a will which both inclines and hastens on with the strongest affection towards sin; man, when placed under this bondage, being deprived not of will, but of soundness of will. Bernard says not improperly, that all of us have a will; but to will well is proficiency, to will ill is defect. Thus simply to will is the part of man, to will ill the part of corrupt nature, to will well the part of grace. Moreover, when I say that the will, deprived of liberty, is led or dragged by necessity to evil, it is strange that any should deem the expression harsh, seeing there is no absurdity in it, and it is not at variance with pious use. It does, however, offend those who know not how to distinguish between necessity and compulsion. Were any one to ask them, Is not God necessarily good, is not the devil necessarily wicked, what answer would they give? The goodness of God is so connected with his Godhead, that it is not more necessary to be God than to be good; whereas the devil, by his fall, was so estranged from goodness, that he can do nothing but evil. Should any one give utterance to the profane jeer, (see Calvin Adv. Pighium,) that little praise is due to God for a goodness to which he is forced, is it not obvious to every man to reply, It is owing not to violent impulse, but to his boundless goodness, that he cannot do evil? Therefore, if the free will of God in doing good is not impeded, because he necessarily must do good; if the devil, who can do nothing but evil, nevertheless sins voluntarily; can it be said that man sins less voluntarily because he is under a necessity of sinning? This necessity is uniformly proclaimed by Augustine, who, even when pressed by the invidious cavil of Celestius, hesitated not to assert it in the following terms: "Man through liberty became a sinner, but corruption, ensuing as the penalty, has converted liberty into necessity," (August. Lib. de Perf. Justit.) Whenever mention is made of the subject, he hesitates not to speak in this way of the necessary bondage of sin, (August. de Natura et Gratia, et alibi.) Let this, then, be regarded as the sum of the distinction. Man, since he was corrupted by the fall, sins not forced or

unwilling, but voluntarily, by a most forward bias of the mind; not by violent compulsion, or external force, but by the movement of his own passion; and yet such is the depravity of his nature, that he cannot move and act except in the direction of evil. If this is true, the thing not obscurely expressed is, that he is under a necessity of sinning. Bernard, assenting to Augustine, thus writes: "Among animals, man alone is free, and yet sin intervening, he suffers a kind of violence, but a violence proceeding from his will, not from nature, so that it does not even deprive him of innate liberty," (Bernard, *Sermo. super Cantica*, 81.) For that which is voluntary is also free. A little after he adds, "Thus, by some means strange and wicked, the will itself, being deteriorated by sin, makes a necessity; but so that the necessity, in as much as it is voluntary, cannot excuse the will, and the will, in as much as it is enticed, cannot exclude the necessity." For this necessity is in a manner voluntary. He afterwards says that "we are under a yoke, but no other yoke than that of voluntary servitude; therefore, in respect of servitude, we are miserable, and in respect of will, inexcusable; because the will, when it was free, made itself the slave of sin." At length he concludes, "Thus the soul, in some strange and evil way, is held under this kind of voluntary, yet sadly free necessity, both bond and free; bond in respect of necessity, free in respect of will: and what is still more strange, and still more miserable, it is guilty because free, and enslaved because guilty, and therefore enslaved because free." My readers hence perceive that the doctrine which I deliver is not new, but the doctrine which of old Augustine delivered with the consent of all the godly, and which was afterwards shut up in the cloisters of monks for almost a thousand years. Lombard, by not knowing how to distinguish between necessity and compulsion, gave occasion to a pernicious error.<sup>1</sup>

6. On the other hand, it may be proper to consider what the remedy is which divine grace provides for the correction

<sup>1</sup> The French adds, "Qui a esté une peste mortelle à l'Eglise, d'estimer que l'homme pouvoit éviter le peché pource qu'il peche franchement;" which has been a deadly pest to the Church, viz., that man could avoid sin, because he sins frankly.

and cure of natural corruption. Since the Lord, in bringing assistance, supplies us with what is lacking, the nature of that assistance will immediately make manifest its converse, viz., our penury. When the Apostle says to the Philippians, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ," (Phil. i. 6,) there cannot be a doubt, that by the good work thus begun, he means the very commencement of conversion in the will. God, therefore, begins the good work in us by exciting in our hearts a desire, a love, and a study of righteousness, or (to speak more correctly) by turning, training, and guiding our hearts unto righteousness; and he completes this good work by confirming us unto perseverance. But lest any one should cavil that the good work thus begun by the Lord consists in aiding the will, which is in itself weak, the Spirit elsewhere declares what the will, when left to itself, is able to do. His words are, "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them," (Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27.) How can it be said that the weakness of the human will is aided so as to enable it to aspire effectually to the choice of good, when the fact is, that it must be wholly transformed and renovated? If there is any softness in a stone; if you can make it tender, and flexible into any shape, then it may be said, that the human heart may be shaped for rectitude, provided that which is imperfect in it is supplemented by divine grace. But if the Spirit, by the above similitude, meant to show that no good can ever be extracted from our heart until it is made altogether new, let us not attempt to share with Him what He claims for himself alone. If it is like turning a stone into flesh when God turns us to the study of rectitude, everything proper to our own will is abolished, and that which succeeds in its place is wholly of God. I say the will is abolished, but not in so far as it is will, for in conversion everything essential to our original nature remains: I also say, that it is created anew, not



because the will then begins to exist, but because it is turned from evil to good. This, I maintain, is wholly the work of God, because, as the Apostle testifies, we are not "sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves," (2 Cor. iii. 5.) Accordingly, he elsewhere says, not merely that God assists the weak or corrects the depraved will, but that he worketh in us to will, (Philip. ii. 13.) From this it is easily inferred, as I have said, that everything good in the will is entirely the result of grace. In the same sense, the Apostle elsewhere says, "It is the same God which worketh all in all," (1 Cor. xii. 6.) For he is not there treating of universal government, but declaring that all the good qualities which believers possess are due to God. In using the term "all," he certainly makes God the author of spiritual life from its beginning to its end. This he had previously taught in different terms, when he said that there is "one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him," (1 Cor. viii. 6;) thus plainly extolling the new creation, by which everything of our common nature is destroyed. There is here a tacit antithesis between Adam and Christ, which he elsewhere explains more clearly when he says, "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them," (Eph. ii. 10.) His meaning is to show in this way that our salvation is gratuitous, because the beginning of goodness is from the second creation which is obtained in Christ. If any, even the minutest, ability were in ourselves, there would also be some merit. But to show our utter destitution, he argues, that we merit nothing, because we are created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath prepared; again intimating by these words, that all the fruits of good works are originally and immediately from God. Hence the Psalmist, after saying that the Lord "hath made us," to deprive us of all share in the work, immediately adds, "not we ourselves." That he is speaking of regeneration, which is the commencement of the spiritual life, is obvious from the context, in which the next words are, "we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture," (Psalm c. 3.) Not contented with simply giving God the praise of our salvation, he dis-

tinely excludes us from all share in it, just as if he had said that not one particle remains to man as a ground of boasting. The whole is of God.

7. But perhaps there will be some who, while they admit that the will is in its own nature averse to righteousness, and is converted solely by the power of God, will yet hold that, when once it is prepared, it performs a part in acting. This they found upon the words of Augustine, that grace precedes every good work; the will accompanying, not leading; a handmaid, and not a guide, (August. ad Bonifac. Ep. 106.) The words thus not improperly used by this holy writer, Lombard preposterously wrests to the above effect, (Lombard, Lib. ii. Dist. 25.) But I maintain, that as well in the words of the Psalmist which I have quoted, as in other passages of Scripture, two things are clearly taught, viz., that the Lord both corrects, or rather destroys, our depraved will, and also substitutes a good will from himself. In as much as it is prevented by grace, I have no objection to your calling it a handmaid; but in as much as when formed again, it is the work of the Lord, it is erroneous to say, that it accompanies preventing grace as a voluntary attendant. Therefore, Chrysostom is inaccurate in saying, that grace cannot do any thing without will, nor will any thing without grace, (Serm. de Invent. Sanct. Crucis;) as if grace did not, in terms of the passage lately quoted from Paul, produce the very will itself. The intention of Augustine, in calling the human will the handmaid of grace, was not to assign it a kind of second place to grace in the performance of good works. His object merely was to refute the pestilential dogma of Pelagius, who made human merit the first cause of salvation. As was sufficient for his purpose at the time, he contends that grace is prior to all merit, while, in the meantime, he says nothing of the other question as to the perpetual effect of grace, which, however, he handles admirably in other places. For in saying, as he often does, that the Lord prevents the unwilling in order to make him willing, and follows after the willing that he may not will in vain, he makes Him the sole author of good works. Indeed, his sentiments on this subject are too clear to need any lengthened illustration. “Men,” says he,

“labour to find in our will something that is our own, and not God’s; how they can find it, I wot not,” (August. de Remiss. Peccat., Lib. ii. c. 18.) In his First Book against Pelagius and Celestius, expounding the saying of Christ, “Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me,” (John vi. 45,) he says, “The will is aided not only so as to know what is to be done, but also to do what it knows.” And thus, when God teaches not by the letter of the Law, but by the grace of the Spirit, he so teaches, that every one who has learned, not only knowing, sees, but also willing, desires, and acting, performs.

8. Since we are now occupied with the chief point on which the controversy turns, let us give the reader the sum of the matter in a few, and those most unambiguous, passages of Scripture; thereafter, lest any one should charge us with distorting Scripture, let us show that the truth, which we maintain to be derived from Scripture, is not unsupported by the testimony of this holy man, (I mean Augustine.) I deem it unnecessary to bring forward every separate passage of Scripture in confirmation of my doctrine. A selection of the most choice passages will pave the way for the understanding of all those which lie scattered up and down in the sacred volume. On the other hand, I thought it not out of place to show my accordance with a man whose authority is justly of so much weight in the Christian world. It is certainly easy to prove that the commencement of good is only with God, and that none but the elect have a will inclined to good. But the cause of election must be sought out of man; and hence it follows that a right will is derived not from man himself, but from the same good pleasure by which we were chosen before the creation of the world. Another argument much akin to this may be added. The beginning of right will and action being of faith, we must see whence faith itself is. But since Scripture proclaims throughout that it is the free gift of God, it follows, that when men, who are with their whole soul naturally prone to evil, begin to have a good will, it is owing to mere grace. Therefore, when the Lord, in the conversion of his people, sets down



these two things as requisite to be done, viz., to take away the heart of stone, and give a heart of flesh, he openly declares, that, in order to our conversion to righteousness, what is ours must be taken away, and that what is substituted in its place is of himself. Nor does he declare this in one passage only. For he says in Jeremiah, "I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever;" and a little after he says, "I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me," (Jer. xxxii. 39, 40.) Again, in Ezekiel, "I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh," (Ezek. xi. 19.) He could not more clearly claim to himself, and deny to us, everything good and right in our will, than by declaring, that in our conversion there is the creation of a new spirit and a new heart. It always follows, both that nothing good can proceed from our will until it be formed again, and that after it is formed again, in so far as it is good, it is of God, and not of us.

9. With this view, likewise, the prayers of the saints correspond. Thus Solomon prays that the Lord may "incline our hearts unto him, to walk in his ways, and keep his commandments," (1 Kings viii. 58;) intimating that our heart is perverse, and naturally indulges in rebellion against the Divine law, until it be turned. Again, it is said in the Psalms, "Incline my heart unto thy testimonies," (Ps. cxix. 36.) For we should always note the antithesis between the rebellious movement of the heart, and the correction by which it is subdued to obedience. David, feeling for the time that he was deprived of directing grace, prays, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me," (Ps. li. 10.) Is not this an acknowledgment that all the parts of the heart are full of impurity, and that the soul has received a twist, which has turned it from straight to crooked? And then, in describing the cleansing, which he earnestly demands as a thing to be created by God, does he not ascribe the work entirely to Him? If it is objected, that the prayer itself is a symptom of a pious and holy affection, it is easy to reply, that although David had already in some measure

repented, he was here contrasting the sad fall which he had experienced with his former state. Therefore, speaking in the person of a man alienated from God, he properly prays for the blessings which God bestows upon his elect in regeneration. Accordingly, like one dead, he desires to be created anew, so as to become, instead of a slave of Satan, an instrument of the Holy Spirit. Strange and monstrous are the longings of our pride. There is nothing which the Lord enjoins more strictly than the religious observance of his Sabbath, in other words, resting from our works; but in nothing do we show greater reluctance than to renounce our own works, and give due place to the works of God. Did not arrogance stand in the way, we could not overlook the clear testimony which Christ has borne to the efficacy of his grace. "I," said he, "am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman." "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me," (John xv. 1, 4.) If we can no more bear fruit of ourselves than a vine can bud when rooted up and deprived of moisture, there is no longer any room to ask what the aptitude of our nature is for good. There is no ambiguity in the conclusion, "For without me ye can do nothing." He says not that we are too weak to suffice for ourselves; but, by reducing us to nothing, he excludes the idea of our possessing any, even the least ability. If, when engrafted into Christ, we bear fruit like the vine, which draws its vegetative power from the moisture of the ground, and the dew of heaven, and the fostering warmth of the sun, I see nothing in a good work, which we can call our own, without trenching upon what is due to God. It is vain to have recourse to the frivolous cavil, that the sap and the power of producing are already contained in the vine, and that, therefore, instead of deriving everything from the earth or the original root, it contributes something of its own. Our Saviour's words simply mean, that when separated from him, we are nothing but dry, useless wood, because, when so separated, we have no power to do good, as he elsewhere says, "Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up,"

(Matth. xv. 13.) Accordingly, in the passage already quoted from the Apostle Paul, he attributes the whole operation to God, "It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure," (Philip. ii. 13.) The first part of a good work is the will, the second is vigorous effort in the doing of it.<sup>1</sup> God is the author of both. It is, therefore, robbery from God to arrogate anything to ourselves, either in the will or the act. Were it said that God gives assistance to a weak will, something might be left us; but when it is said that he makes the will, every thing good in it is placed without us. Moreover, since even a good will is still weighed down by the burden of the flesh, and prevented from rising, it is added, that, to meet the difficulties of the contest, God supplies the persevering effort until the effect is obtained. Indeed, the Apostle could not otherwise have said, as he elsewhere does, that "it is the same God which worketh all in all," (1 Cor. xii. 6;) words comprehending, as we have already observed, (sec. 6,) the whole course of the spiritual life. For which reason, David, after praying, "Teach me thy way, O Lord, I will walk in thy truth," adds, "unite my heart to fear thy name," (Ps. lxxxvi. 11;) by these words intimating, that even those who are well-affected are liable to so many distractions that they easily become vain, and fall away, if not strengthened to persevere. And hence, in another passage, after praying, "Order my steps in thy word," he requests that strength also may be given him to carry on the war, "Let not any iniquity have dominion over me," (Ps. cxix. 133.) In this way, the Lord both begins and perfects the good work in us, so that it is due to Him, first, that the will conceives a love of rectitude, is inclined to desire, is moved and stimulated to pursue it; secondly, that this choice, desire, and endeavour fail not, but are carried forward to effect; and, lastly, that we go on without interruption, and persevere even to the end.

10. This movement of the will is not of that description

<sup>1</sup> French, "La premiere partie des bonnes œuvres est la volonté; l'autre est de s'efforcer a l'executer et le pouvoir faire."—The first part of good works is the will; the second is the attempt to execute it, and the power to do so.



which was for many ages taught and believed, viz., a movement which thereafter leaves us the choice to obey or resist it, but one which affects us efficaciously. We must, therefore, repudiate the oft-repeated sentiment of Chrysostom, "Whom he draws, he draws willingly ;" insinuating that the Lord only stretches out his hand, and waits to see whether we will be pleased to take his aid. We grant that, as man was originally constituted, he could incline to either side, but since he has taught us by his example how miserable a thing free will is if God works not in us to will and to do, of what use to us were grace imparted in such scanty measure? Nay, by our own ingratitude, we obscure and impair divine grace. The Apostle's doctrine is not, that the grace of a good will is offered to us if we will accept of it, but that God himself is pleased so to work in us as to guide, turn, and govern our heart by his Spirit, and reign in it as his own possession. Ezekiel promises that a new spirit will be given to the elect, not merely that they may be able to walk in his precepts, but that they may really walk in them, (Ezek. xi. 19; xxxvi. 27.) And the only meaning which can be given to our Saviour's words, "Every man, therefore, that hath heard and learned of the Father, cometh unto me," (John vi. 45,) is, that the grace of God is effectual in itself. This Augustine maintains in his book *De Prædestinatione Sancta*. This grace is not bestowed on all promiscuously, according to the common brocard, (of Occam, if I mistake not,) that it is not denied to any one who does what in him lies. Men are indeed to be taught that the favour of God is offered, without exception, to all who ask it; but since those only begin to ask whom heavenly grace inspires, even this minute portion of praise must not be withheld from him. It is the privilege of the elect to be regenerated by the Spirit of God, and then placed under his guidance and government. Wherefore Augustine justly derides some who arrogate to themselves a certain power of willing, as well as censures others who imagine that that which is a special evidence of gratuitous election is given to all, (August. de Verbis Apost. Serm. xxi.) He says, "Nature is common to all, but not grace;" and he calls it a showy

acuteness "which shines by mere vanity, when that which God bestows on whom he will is attributed generally to all." Elsewhere he says, "How came you? By believing. Fear, lest by arrogating to yourself the merit of finding the right way, you perish from the right way. I came, you say, by free choice, came by my own will. Why do you boast? Would you know that even this was given you? Hear Christ exclaiming, 'No man cometh unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him.'" And from the words of John, (vi. 44,) he infers it to be an incontrovertible fact, that the hearts of believers are so effectually governed from above, that they follow with undeviating affection. "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him," (1 John iii. 9.) That intermediate movement which the sophists imagine, a movement which every one is free to obey or to reject, is obviously excluded by the doctrine of effectual perseverance.<sup>1</sup>

11. As to perseverance, it would undoubtedly have been regarded as the gratuitous gift of God, had not the very pernicious error prevailed, that it is bestowed in proportion to human merit, according to the reception which each individual gives to the first grace. This having given rise to the idea that it was entirely in our own power to receive or reject the offered grace of God, that idea is no sooner exploded than the error founded on it must fall. The error, indeed, is twofold. For, besides teaching that our gratitude for the first grace and our legitimate use of it is rewarded by subsequent supplies of grace, its abettors add that, after this, grace does not operate alone, but only co-operates with ourselves. As to the former, we must hold that the Lord, while he

<sup>1</sup> The French is, "Nous voyons que ce mouvement sans vertu, lequel imaginent les sophistes, est exclus; J'entend ce qu'ils disent, que Dieu offre seulement sa grace, a telle condition que chacun la refuse ou accepte selon que bon lui semble. Telle reverie di-je, qui n'est ne chair ne poisson, est exclue, quand il est dit que Dieu nous fait tellement perseverer que nous sommes hors de danger de decliver."—We see that this movement without virtue, which the sophists imagine, is excluded, I mean their dogma, that God only offers his grace on such conditions that each may refuse or accept it as seems to him good. Such a reverie, I say, which is neither fish nor flesh, is excluded, when it is said that God makes us so persevere that we are in no danger of declining.

daily enriches his servants, and loads them with new gifts of his grace, because he approves of and takes pleasure in the work which he has begun, finds that in them which he may follow up with larger measures of grace. To this effect are the sentences, "To him that hath shall be given." "Well done, good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things," (Matth. xxv. 21, 23, 29; Luke xix. 17, 26.) But here two precautions are necessary. It must not be said that the legitimate use of the first grace is rewarded by subsequent measures of grace, as if man rendered the grace of God effectual by his own industry, nor must it be thought that there is any such remuneration as to make it cease to be the gratuitous grace of God. I admit, then, that believers may expect as a blessing from God, that the better the use they make of previous, the larger the supplies they will receive of future grace; but I say that even this use is of the Lord, and that this remuneration is bestowed freely of mere good will. The trite distinction of operating and co-operating grace is employed no less sinistrously than unhappily. Augustine, indeed, used it, but softened it by a suitable definition, viz., that God, by co-operating, perfects what he begins by operating,—that both graces are the same, but obtain different names from the different manner in which they produce their effects. Whence it follows, that he does not make an apportionment between God and man, as if a proper movement on the part of each produced a mutual concurrence. All he does is to mark a multiplication of grace. To this effect, accordingly, he elsewhere says, that in man good will precedes many gifts from God; but among these gifts is this good will itself. (*August. Enchiridion ad Laurent.* cap. 32.) Whence it follows, that nothing is left for the will to arrogate as its own. This Paul has expressly stated. For, after saying, "It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do," he immediately adds, "of his good pleasure," (Philip. ii. 13;) indicating by this expression, that the blessing is gratuitous. As to the common saying, that after we have given admission to the first grace, our efforts co-operate with subsequent grace, this is my answer:—If



it is meant that after we are once subdued by the power of the Lord to the obedience of righteousness, we proceed voluntarily, and are inclined to follow the movement of grace, I have nothing to object. For it is most certain, that where the grace of God reigns, there is also this readiness to obey. And whence this readiness, but just that the Spirit of God being everywhere consistent with himself, after first begetting a principle of obedience, cherishes and strengthens it for perseverance? If, again, it is meant that man is able of himself to be a fellow-labourer with the grace of God, I hold it to be a most pestilential delusion.

12. In support of this view, some make an ignorant and false application of the Apostle's words: "I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me," (1 Cor. xv. 10.) The meaning they give them is, that as Paul might have seemed to speak somewhat presumptuously in preferring himself to all the other apostles, he corrects the expression so far by referring the praise to the grace of God, but he, at the same time, calls himself a co-operator with grace. It is strange that this should have proved a stumbling-block to so many writers, otherwise respectable. The Apostle says not that the grace of God laboured with him so as to make him a copartner in the labour. He rather transfers the whole merit of the labour to grace alone, by thus modifying his first expression, "It was not I," says he, "that laboured, but the grace of God that was present with me." Those who have adopted the erroneous interpretation have been misled by an ambiguity in the expression, or rather by a preposterous translation, in which the force of the Greek article is overlooked. For to take the words literally, the Apostle does not say that grace was a fellow-worker with him, but that the grace which was with him was sole worker. And this is taught not obscurely, though briefly, by Augustine, when he says, "Good will in man precedes many gifts from God, but not all gifts, seeing that the will which precedes is itself among the number." He adds the reason, "for it is written, 'The God of my mercy shall prevent me,' (Ps. lix. 10,) and 'Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me,' (Ps. xxiii. 6;)"

it prevents him that is unwilling, and makes him willing; it follows him that is willing, that he may not will in vain." To this Bernard assents, introducing the Church as praying thus, "Draw me, who am in some measure unwilling, and make me willing; draw me, who am sluggishly lagging, and make me run," (Serm. II. in Cantic.)

13. Let us now hear Augustine in his own words, lest the Pelagians of our age, I mean the sophists of the Sorbonne, charge us after their wont with being opposed to all antiquity. In this, indeed, they imitate their father Pelagius, by whom of old a similar charge was brought against Augustine. In the second chapter of his Treatise De Correptione et Gratia, addressed to Valentinus, Augustine explains at length what I will state briefly, but in his own words, that to Adam was given the grace of persevering in goodness if he had the will; to us it is given to will, and by will overcome concupiscence: that Adam, therefore, had the power if he had the will, but did not will to have the power, whereas to us is given both the will and the power; that the original freedom of man was to be able not to sin, but that we have a much greater freedom, viz., not to be able to sin. And lest it should be supposed, as Lombard erroneously does, (Lib. ii. Dist. 25,) that he is speaking of the perfection of the future state, he shortly after removes all doubt when he says, "For so much is the will of the saints inflamed by the Holy Spirit, that they are able, because they are willing; and willing, because God worketh in them so to will." For if, in such weakness, (in which, however, to suppress pride, "strength" must be made "perfect,") their own will is left to them, in such sense that, by the help of God, they are able, if they will, while at the same time God does not work in them so as to make them will; among so many temptations and infirmities the will itself would give way, and, consequently, they would not be able to persevere. Therefore, to meet the infirmity of the human will, and prevent it from failing, how weak soever it might be, divine grace was made to act on it inseparably and uninterruptedly. Augustine, (ibid. cap. xiv.) next entering fully into the question, how our hearts follow the movement when God affects them, necessarily says, indeed, that

the Lord draws men by their own wills; wills, however, which he himself has produced. We have now an attestation by Augustine to the truth which we are specially desirous to maintain, viz., that the grace offered by the Lord is not merely one which every individual has full liberty of choosing to receive or reject, but a grace which produces in the heart both choice and will: so that all the good works which follow after are its fruit and effect; the only will which yields obedience being the will which grace itself has made. In another place, Augustine uses these words, "Every good work in us is performed only by grace," (August. Ep. 105.)

14. In saying elsewhere that the will is not taken away by grace, but out of bad is changed into good, and after it is good is assisted,—he only means, that man is not drawn as if by an extraneous impulse<sup>1</sup> without the movement of the heart, but is inwardly affected so as to obey from the heart. Declaring that grace is given specially and gratuitously to the elect, he writes in this way to Boniface: "We know that Divine grace is not given to all men, and that to those to whom it is given, it is not given either according to the merit of works, or according to the merit of the will, but by free grace: in regard to those to whom it is not given, we know that the not giving of it is a just judgment from God," (August. ad Bonifac. Ep. 106.) In the same epistle, he argues strongly against the opinion of those who hold that subsequent grace is given to human merit as a reward for not rejecting the first grace. For he presses Pelagius to confess that gratuitous grace is necessary to us for every action, and that merely from the fact of its being truly grace, it cannot be the recompense of works. But the matter cannot be more briefly summed up than in the eighth chapter of his Treatise De Correptione et Gratia, where he shows, *First*, that human will does not by liberty obtain grace, but by grace obtains liberty. *Secondly*, that by means of the same grace, the heart being impressed with a feeling of delight, is trained to persevere, and strengthened with invin-

<sup>1</sup> French, "Comme une pierre;"—like a stone.



cible fortitude. *Thirdly*, that while grace governs the will, it never falls ; but when grace abandons it, it falls forthwith. *Fourthly*, that by the free mercy of God, the will is turned to good, and when turned, perseveres. *Fifthly*, that the direction of the will to good, and its constancy after being so directed, depend entirely on the will of God, and not on any human merit. Thus the will, (free will, if you choose to call it so,) which is left to man, is, as he in another place (Ep. 46) describes it, a will which can neither be turned to God, nor continue in God, unless by grace ; a will which, whatever its ability may be, derives all that ability from grace.

## CHAPTER IV.

## HOW GOD WORKS IN THE HEARTS OF MEN.

The leading points discussed in this chapter are, I. Whether in bad actions anything is to be attributed to God ; if anything, how much. Also, what is to be attributed to the devil and to man, sec. 1-5. II. In indifferent matters, how much is to be attributed to God, and how much is left to man, sec. 6. III. Two objections refuted, sec. 7, 8.

*Sections.*

1. Connection of this chapter with the preceding. Augustine's similitude of a good and bad rider. Question answered in respect to the devil.
2. Question answered in respect to God and man. Example from the history of Job. The works of God distinguished from the works of Satan and wicked men. 1. By the design or end of acting. How Satan acts in the reprobate. 2. How God acts in them.
3. Old Objection, that the agency of God in such cases is referable to prescience or permission, not actual operation. Answer, showing that God blinds and hardens the reprobate, and this in two ways ; 1. By deserting them ; 2. By delivering them over to Satan.
4. Striking passages of Scripture, proving that God acts in both ways, and disposing of the objection with regard to prescience. Confirmation from Augustine.
5. A modification of the former answer, proving that God employs Satan to instigate the reprobate, but, at the same time, is free from all taint.
6. How God works in the hearts of men in indifferent matters. Our will in such matters not so free as to be exempt from the overruling providence of God. This confirmed by various examples.
7. Objection, that these examples do not form the rule. An answer, fortified by the testimony of universal experience, by Scripture, and a passage of Augustine.
8. Some, in arguing against the error of free will, draw an argument from the event. How this is to be understood.

1. THAT man is so enslaved by the yoke of sin, that he cannot of his own nature aim at good either in wish or

actual pursuit, has, I think, been sufficiently proved. Moreover, a distinction has been drawn between compulsion and necessity, making it clear that man, though he sins necessarily, nevertheless sins voluntarily. But since, from his being brought into bondage to the devil, it would seem that he is actuated more by the devil's will than his own, it is necessary, first, to explain what the agency of each is, and then solve the question,<sup>1</sup> Whether in bad actions anything is to be attributed to God, Scripture intimating that there is some way in which he interferes? Augustine (in Psalm xxxi. and xxxiii.) compares the human will to a horse preparing to start, and God and the devil to riders. "If God mounts, he, like a temperate and skilful rider, guides it calmly, urges it when too slow, reins it in when too fast, curbs its forwardness and over-action, checks its bad temper, and keeps it on the proper course; but if the devil has seized the saddle, like an ignorant and rash rider, he hurries it over broken ground, drives it into ditches, dashes it over precipices, spurs it into obstinacy or fury." With this simile, since a better does not occur, we shall for the present be contented. When it is said, then, that the will of the natural man is subject to the power of the devil, and is actuated by him, the meaning is, not that the will, while reluctant and resisting, is forced to submit, (as masters oblige unwilling slaves to execute their orders,) but that, fascinated by the impostures of Satan, it necessarily yields to his guidance, and does him homage. Those whom the Lord favours not with the direction of his Spirit, he, by a righteous judgment, consigns to the agency of Satan. Wherefore, the Apostle says, that "the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine into them." And, in another passage, he describes the devil as "the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience," (Eph. ii. 2.) The blinding of the wicked, and all the iniquities consequent upon it, are called the works of Satan; works, the cause of which is not

<sup>1</sup> The French adds, "dout on doute communement;" on which doubts are commonly entertained.



to be sought in anything external to the will of man, in which the root of the evil lies, and in which the foundation of Satan's kingdom, in other words, sin, is fixed.

2. The nature of the divine agency in such cases is very different. For the purpose of illustration, let us refer to the calamities brought upon holy Job by the Chaldeans. They having slain his shepherds, carry off his flocks. The wickedness of their deed is manifest,<sup>1</sup> as is also the hand of Satan, who, as the history informs us, was the instigator of the whole. Job, however, recognises it as the work of God, saying, that what the Chaldeans had plundered, "the Lord" had "taken away." How can we attribute the same work to God, to Satan, and to man, without either excusing Satan by the interference of God, or making God the author of the crime? This is easily done, if we look first to the end, and then to the mode of acting. The Lord designs to exercise the patience of his servant by adversity; Satan's plan is to drive him to despair; while the Chaldeans are bent on making unlawful gain by plunder. Such diversity of purpose makes a wide distinction in the act. In the mode there is not less difference. The Lord permits Satan to afflict his servant; and the Chaldeans, who had been chosen as the ministers to execute the deed, he hands over to the impulses of Satan, who, pricking on the already depraved Chaldeans with his poisoned darts, instigates them to commit the crime. They rush furiously on to the unrighteous deed, and become its guilty perpetrators. Here Satan is properly said to act in the reprobate, over whom he exercises his sway, which is that of wickedness. God also is said to act in his own way; because even Satan, when he is the instrument of divine wrath, is completely under the command of God, who turns him as he will in the execution of his just judgments. I say nothing here of the universal agency of God, which, as it sustains all the creatures, also

<sup>1</sup> The French adds, "Car quand nous voyons des voleurs, qui ont commis quelque meurtre ou larcin, nous ne doutons point de leur imputer la faute, et de les condamner."—For when we see robbers who have committed some murder or robbery, we hesitate not to impute the blame to them, and condemn them.

gives them all their power of acting. I am now speaking only of that special agency which is apparent in every act. We thus see that there is no inconsistency in attributing the same act to God, to Satan, and to man, while, from the difference in the end and mode of action, the spotless righteousness of God shines forth at the same time that the iniquity of Satan and of man is manifested in all its deformity.

3. Ancient writers sometimes manifest a superstitious dread of making a simple confession of the truth in this matter, from a fear of furnishing impiety with a handle for speaking irreverently of the works of God. While I embrace such soberness with all my heart, I cannot see the least danger in simply holding what Scripture delivers. Even Augustine was not always free from this superstition, as when he says, that blinding and hardening have respect not to the operation of God, but to prescience, (*Lib. de Predestina. et Gratia.*) But this subtilty is repudiated by many passages of Scripture, which clearly show that the divine interference amounts to something more than prescience. And Augustine himself, in his book against Julian,<sup>1</sup> contends at length that sins are manifestations not merely of divine permission or patience, but also of divine power, that thus former sins may be punished. In like manner, what is said of permission is too weak to stand. God is very often said to blind and harden the reprobate, to turn their hearts, to incline and impel them, as I have elsewhere fully explained, (*Book I. c. xviii.*) The extent of this agency can never be explained by having recourse to prescience or permission. We, therefore, hold that there are two methods in which God may so act. When his light is taken away, nothing remains but blindness and darkness: when his Spirit is taken away, our hearts become hard as stones: when his guidance is withdrawn, we immediately turn from the right path: and hence he is properly said to incline, harden, and blind those whom he deprives of the faculty of seeing, obeying, and rightly executing. The second method, which comes

<sup>1</sup> The French adds, "se retractant de l'autre sentence;" retracting the other sentiment.

much nearer to the exact meaning of the words, is when executing his judgments by Satan as the minister of his anger, God both directs men's counsels, and excites their wills, and regulates their efforts as he pleases. Thus when Moses relates that Sihon, king of the Amorites, did not give the Israelites a passage, because the Lord "had hardened his spirit, and made his heart obstinate," he immediately adds the purpose which God had in view, viz., that he might deliver him into their hand, (Deut. ii. 30.) As God had resolved to destroy him, the hardening of his heart was the divine preparation for his ruin.

4. In accordance with the former method, it seems to be said,<sup>1</sup> "The law shall perish from the priest, and counsel from the ancients." "He poureth contempt upon princes, and causeth them to wander in the wilderness, where there is no way." Again, "O Lord, why hast thou made us to err from thy ways, and hardened our heart from thy fear?" These passages rather indicate what men become when God deserts them, than what the nature of his agency is when he works in them. But there are other passages which go farther, such as those concerning the hardening of Pharaoh: "I will harden his heart, that he shall not let the people go." The same thing is afterwards repeated in stronger terms. Did he harden his heart by not softening it? This is, indeed, true; but he did something more: he gave it in charge to Satan to confirm him in his obstinacy. Hence he had previously said, "I am sure he will not let you go." The people come out of Egypt, and the inhabitants of a hostile region come forth against them. How were they instigated? Moses certainly declares of Sihon, that it was the Lord who "had hardened his spirit, and made his heart obstinate," (Deut. ii. 30.) The Psalmist, relating the same history, says, "He turned their hearts to hate his people," (Psalm cv. 25.) You cannot now say that they stumbled merely because they were deprived of divine counsel. For if they are *hardened* and *turned*, they are purposely bent to the very end in view. Moreover, whenever God saw it meet to punish the people for their

<sup>1</sup> Ezek. vii. 26; Psalm cvii. 40; Job xii. 20, 24; Isaiah lxiii. 17; Exod. iv. 21; vii. 3; x. 1; iii. 19.



transgression, in what way did he accomplish his purpose by the reprobate? In such a way as shows that the efficacy of the action was in him, and that they were only ministers. At one time he declares, "that he will lift an ensign to the nations from far, and will hiss unto them from the end of the earth;" at another, that he will take a net to ensnare them; and at another, that he will be like a hammer to strike them. But he specially declared that he was not inactive among them, when he called Sennacherib an axe, which was formed and destined to be wielded by his own hand.<sup>1</sup> Augustine is not far from the mark when he states the matter thus, That men sin, is attributable to themselves: that in sinning they produce this or that result, is owing to the mighty power of God, who divides the darkness as he pleases, (August. de Prædest. Sanct.)

5. Moreover, that the ministry of Satan is employed to instigate the reprobate, whenever the Lord, in the course of his providence, has any purpose to accomplish in them, will sufficiently appear from a single passage. It is repeatedly said in the First Book of Samuel, that an evil spirit from the Lord came upon Saul, and troubled him, (1 Sam. xvi. 14; xviii. 10; xix. 9.) It were impious to apply this to the Holy Spirit. An impure spirit must therefore be called a spirit from the Lord, because completely subservient to his purpose, being more an instrument in acting than a proper agent. We should also add what Paul says, "God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth," (2 Thess. ii. 11, 12.) But in the same transaction there is always a wide difference between what the Lord does, and what Satan and the ungodly design to do. The wicked instruments, which he has under his hand and can turn as he pleases, he makes subservient to his own justice. They, as they are wicked, give effect to the iniquity conceived in their wicked minds. Every thing necessary to vindicate the majesty of God from calumny, and cut off any subterfuge on the part of the ungodly, has already been expounded in

<sup>1</sup> Isa. v. 26; vii. 18; Ezek. xii. 13; xvii. 20; Jer. l. 23; Isa. x. 15.

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the Chapters on Providence, (Book I. Chapter xvi.—xviii.) Here I only meant to show, in a few words, how Satan reigns in the reprobate, and how God works in both.

6. In those actions, which in themselves are neither good nor bad, and concern the corporeal rather than the spiritual life, the liberty which man possesses, although we have above touched upon it, (*supra*, Chap. ii. sect. 13–17,) has not yet been explained. Some have conceded a free choice to man in such actions; more, I suppose, because they were unwilling to debate a matter of no great moment, than because they wished positively to assert what they were prepared to concede. While I admit that those who hold that man has no ability in himself to do righteousness, hold what is most necessary to be known for salvation, I think it ought not to be overlooked that we owe it to the special grace of God, whenever, on the one hand, we choose what is for our advantage, and whenever our will inclines in that direction; and on the other, whenever with heart and soul we shun what would otherwise do us harm. And the interference of Divine Providence goes to the extent not only of making events turn out as was foreseen to be expedient, but of giving the wills of men the same direction. If we look at the administration of human affairs with the eye of sense, we will have no doubt that, so far, they are placed at man's disposal; but if we lend an ear to the many passages of Scripture which proclaim that even in these matters the minds of men are ruled by God, they will compel us to place human choice in subordination to his special influence. Who gave the Israelites such favour in the eyes of the Egyptians, that they lent them all their most valuable commodities? (Exod. xi. 3.) They never would have been so inclined of their own accord. Their inclinations, therefore, were more overruled by God than regulated by themselves. And surely, had not Jacob been persuaded that God inspires men with divers affections as seemeth to him good, he would not have said of his son Joseph, (whom he thought to be some heathen Egyptian,) "God Almighty give you mercy before the man," (Gen. xliii. 14.) In like manner, the whole Church confesses that when the Lord was pleased to pity his people,

he made them also to be pitied of all them that carried them captives, (Ps. cvi. 46.) In like manner, when his anger was kindled against Saul, so that he prepared himself for battle, the cause is stated to have been, that a spirit from God fell upon him, (1 Sam. xi. 6.) Who dissuaded Absalom from adopting the counsel of Ahithophel, which was wont to be regarded as an oracle? (2 Sam. xvii. 14.) Who disposed Rehoboam to adopt the counsel of the young men? (1 Kings xii. 10.) Who caused the approach of the Israelites to strike terror into nations formerly distinguished for valour? Even the harlot Rahab recognised the hand of the Lord. Who, on the other hand, filled the hearts of the Israelites with fear and dread, (Lev. xxvi. 36,) but He who threatened in the Law that he would give them a "trembling heart?" (Deut. xxxiii. 65.)

7. It may be objected, that these are special examples which cannot be regarded as a general rule. They are sufficient, at all events, to prove the point for which I contend, viz., that whenever God is pleased to make way for his providence, he even in external matters so turns and bends the wills of men, that whatever the freedom of their choice may be, it is still subject to the disposal of God. That your mind depends more on the agency of God than the freedom of your own choice, daily experience teaches. Your judgment often fails, and in matters of no great difficulty, your courage flags; at other times, in matters of the greatest obscurity, the mode of explicating them at once suggests itself, while in matters of moment and danger, your mind rises superior to every difficulty.<sup>1</sup> In this way, I interpret the words of Solomon, "The hearing ear, and the seeing eye, the Lord hath made even both of them," (Prov. xx. 12.) For they seem to me to refer not to their creation, but to peculiar grace in the use of them. When he says, "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord as the rivers of water; he turneth it whithersoever he will," (Prov. xxi. 1,) he comprehends the whole race under one particular class. If any will is free from

<sup>1</sup> The French adds, "D'où procede cela sinon que Dieu besongne tant d'une part que d'autre?"—Whence this, but that God interferes thus far in either case?



subjection, it must be that of one possessed of regal power, and in a manner exercising dominion over other wills. But if it is under the hand of God, ours surely cannot be exempt from it. On this subject there is an admirable sentiment of Augustine, "Scripture, if it be carefully examined, will show not only that the good wills of men are made good by God out of evil, and when so made, are directed to good acts, even to eternal life, but those which retain the elements of the world are in the power of God, to turn them whither he pleases, and when he pleases, either to perform acts of kindness, or by a hidden, indeed, but, at the same time, most just judgment, to inflict punishment," (August. *De Gratia et Lib. Arb. ad Valent. cap. xx.*)

8. Let the reader here remember, that the power of the human will is not to be estimated by the event, as some unskilful persons are absurdly wont to do. They think it an elegant and ingenious proof of the bondage of the human will, that even the greatest monarchs are sometimes thwarted in their wishes. But the ability of which we speak must be considered as within the man, not measured by outward success. In discussing the subject of free will, the question is not, whether external obstacles will permit a man to execute what he has internally resolved, but whether, in any matter whatever, he has a free power of judging and of willing. If men possess both of these, Attilius Regulus, shut up in a barrel studded with sharp nails, will have a will no less free than Augustus Cæsar ruling with imperial sway over a large portion of the globe.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The French is simply, "Car si cela pouvoit etre en l'homme, il ne seroit par moins libre enfermé en un prison que dominant par toute la terre." If that could be in man, he would be no less free shut up in a prison, than ruling all the earth.

## CHAPTER V.

THE ARGUMENTS USUALLY ALLEGED IN SUPPORT OF FREE  
WILL REFUTED.

Objections reduced to three principal heads :—I. Four absurdities advanced by the opponents of the orthodox doctrine concerning the slavery of the will, stated and refuted, sec. 1-5. II. The passages of Scripture which they pervert in favour of their error, reduced to five heads, and explained, sec. 6-15. III. Five other passages quoted in defence of free will expounded, sec. 16-19.

*Sections.*

1. Absurd fictions of opponents first refuted, and then certain passages of Scripture explained. Answer by a negative. Confirmation of the answer.
2. Another absurdity of Aristotle and Pelagius. Answer by a distinction. Answer fortified by passages from Augustine, and supported by the authority of an Apostle.
3. Third absurdity borrowed from the words of Chrysostom. Answer by a negative.
4. Fourth absurdity urged of old by the Pelagians. Answer from the works of Augustine. Illustrated by the testimony of our Saviour. Another answer, which explains the use of exhortations.
5. A third answer, which contains a fuller explanation of the second. Objection to the previous answers. Objection refuted. Summary of the previous answers.
6. First class of arguments which the Neo-Pelagians draw from Scripture in defence of free will. 1. The Law demands perfect obedience; and, therefore, God either mocks us, or requires things which are not in our power. Answer by distinguishing precepts into three sorts. The first of these considered in this and the following section.
7. This general argument from the Law of no avail to the patrons of free will. Promises conjoined with precepts, prove that our salvation is to be found in the grace of God. Objection, that the Law was given to the persons living at the time. Answer, confirmed by passages from Augustine.
8. A special consideration of the three classes of precepts of no avail to the defenders of free will. 1. Precepts enjoining us to turn to

- God. 2. Precepts which simply speak of the observance of the Law. 3. Precepts which enjoin us to persevere in the grace of God.
9. Objection. Answer. Confirmation of the answer from Jeremiah. Another objection refuted.
10. A second class of arguments in defence of free will drawn from the promises of God, viz., that the promises which God makes to those who seek him are vain if it is not in our power to do, or not do, the thing required. Answer, which explains the use of promises, and removes the supposed inconsistency.
11. Third class of arguments drawn from the divine upbraidings,—that it is in vain to upbraid us for evils which it is not in our power to avoid. Answer. Sinners are condemned by their own consciences, and, therefore, the divine upbraidings are just. Moreover, there is a twofold use in these upbraidings. Various passages of Scripture explained by means of the foregoing answers.
12. Objection founded on the words of Moses. Refutation by the words of an Apostle. Confirmation by argument.
13. Fourth class of arguments by the defenders of free will. God waits to see whether or not sinners will repent; therefore they can repent. Answer by a dilemma. Passage in Hosea explained.
14. Fifth class of arguments in defence of free will. Good and bad works described as our own, and therefore we are capable of both. Answer by an exposition, which shows that this argument is unavailing. Objection drawn from analogy. Answer. The nature and mode of divine agency in the elect.
15. Conclusion of the answer to the last class of arguments.
16. Third and last division of the chapter discussing certain passages of Scripture. 1. A passage from Genesis. Its true meaning explained.
17. 2. Passage from the Epistle to the Romans. Explanation. Refutation of an objection. Another refutation. A third refutation from Augustine. 3. A passage from First Corinthians. Answer to it.
18. 4. A passage from Ecclesiastes. Explanation. Another explanation.
19. 5. A passage from Luke. Explanation. Allegorical arguments weak. Another explanation. A third explanation. A fourth from Augustine. Conclusion and summary of the whole discussion concerning free will.

1. ENOUGH would seem to have been said on the subject of man's will, were there not some who endeavour to urge him to his ruin by a false opinion of liberty, and at the same time, in order to support their own opinion, assail ours. First, they gather together some absurd inferences, by which they endea-



vour to bring odium upon our doctrine, as if it were abhorrent to common sense, and then they oppose it with certain passages of Scripture, (*infra*, sec. 6.) Both devices we shall dispose of in their order. If sin, say they, is necessary, it ceases to be sin; if it is voluntary, it may be avoided. Such, too, were the weapons with which Pelagius assailed Augustine. But we are unwilling to crush them by the weight of his name, until we have satisfactorily disposed of the objections themselves. I deny, therefore, that sin ought to be the less imputed because it is necessary; and, on the other hand, I deny the inference, that sin may be avoided because it is voluntary. If any one will dispute with God, and endeavour to evade his judgment, by pretending that he could not have done otherwise, the answer already given is sufficient, that it is owing not to creation, but the corruption of nature, that man has become the slave of sin, and can will nothing but evil. For whence that impotence of which the wicked so readily avail themselves as an excuse, but just because Adam voluntarily subjected himself to the tyranny of the devil? Hence, the corruption by which we are held bound as with chains, originated in the first man's revolt from his Maker. If all men are justly held guilty of this revolt, let them not think themselves excused by a necessity in which they see the clearest cause of their condemnation. But this I have fully explained above; and in the case of the devil himself, have given an example of one who sins not less voluntarily that he sins necessarily. I have also shown, in the case of the elect angels, that though their will cannot decline from good, it does not therefore cease to be will. This Bernard shrewdly explains when he says, (Serm. 81, in Cantica,) that we are the more miserable in this, that the necessity is voluntary; and yet this necessity so binds us who are subject to it, that we are the slaves of sin, as we have already observed. The second step in the reasoning is vicious, because it leaps from *voluntary* to *free*; whereas we have proved above, that a thing may be done voluntarily, though not subject to free choice.

2. They add, that unless virtue and vice proceed from free choice, it is absurd either to punish man or reward him.

Although this argument is taken from Aristotle, I admit that it is also used by Chrysostom and Jerome. Jerome, however, does not disguise that it was familiar to the Pelagians. He even quotes their words, "If grace acts in us, grace, and not we who do the work, will be crowned," (*Hieron. in Ep. ad Ctesiphont. et Dialog. I.*) With regard to punishment, I answer, that it is properly inflicted on those by whom the guilt is contracted. What matters it whether you sin with a free or an enslaved judgment, so long as you sin voluntarily, especially when man is proved to be a sinner because he is under the bondage of sin? In regard to the rewards of righteousness, is there any great absurdity in acknowledging that they depend on the kindness of God rather than our own merits? How often do we meet in Augustine with this expression,—“God crowns not our merits but his own gifts; and the name of reward is given not to what is due to our merits, but to the recompense of grace previously bestowed?” Some seem to think there is acuteness in the remark, that there is no place at all for the mind, if good works do not spring from free will as their proper source; but in thinking this so very unreasonable they are widely mistaken. Augustine does not hesitate uniformly to describe as necessary the very thing which they count it impious to acknowledge. Thus he asks, “What is human merit? He who came to bestow not due recompense but free grace, though himself free from sin, and the giver of freedom, found all men sinners,” (*Augustin. in Psal. xxxi.*) Again, “If you are to receive your due, you must be punished. What then is done? God has not rendered you due punishment, but bestows upon you unmerited grace. If you wish to be an alien from grace, boast your merits,” (*in Psal. lxx.*) Again, “You are nothing in yourself, sin is yours, merit God’s. Punishment is your due; and when the reward shall come, God shall crown his own gifts, not your merits,” (*Ep. lii.*) To the same effect he elsewhere says, (*De Verb. Apostol. Serm. xv.,*) that grace is not of merit, but merit of grace. And shortly after he concludes, that God by his gifts anticipates all our merit, that he may thereby manifest his own merit, and give what is absolutely free, because he sees nothing in us that can

be a ground of salvation. But why extend the list of quotations, when similar sentiments are ever and anon recurring in his works? The abettors of this error would see a still better refutation of it, if they would attend to the source from which the apostle derives the glory of the saints,—“Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified,” (Rom. viii. 30.) On what ground, then, the apostle being judge, (2 Tim. iv. 8,) are believers crowned? Because by the mercy of God, not their own exertions, they are predestinated, called, and justified. Away, then, with the vain fear, that unless free will stand, there will no longer be any merit! It is most foolish to take alarm, and recoil from that which Scripture inculcates. “If thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?” (1 Cor. iv. 7.) You see how every thing is denied to free will, for the very purpose of leaving no room for merit. And yet, as the beneficence and liberality of God are manifold and inexhaustible, the grace which he bestows upon us, inasmuch as he makes it our own, he recompenses as if the virtuous acts were our own.

3. But it is added, in terms which seem to be borrowed from Chrysostom, (Homil. 22, in Genes.,) that if our will possesses not the power of choosing good or evil, all who are partakers of the same nature must be alike good or alike bad. A sentiment akin to this occurs in the work *De Vocatione Gentium*, (Lib. iv. c. 4,) usually attributed to Ambrose, in which it is argued, that no one would ever decline from faith, did not the grace of God leave us in a mutable state. It is strange that such men should have so blundered. How did it fail to occur to Chrysostom, that it is divine election which distinguishes among men? We have not the least hesitation to admit what Paul strenuously maintains, that all, without exception, are depraved and given over to wickedness; but at the same time we add, that through the mercy of God all do not continue in wickedness. Therefore, while we all labour naturally under the same disease, those only recover health to whom the Lord is pleased to put forth his healing hand. The others whom, in just judgment, he passes over, pine and rot away till they are consumed. And this is the only

*2 why is it just?*



reason why some persevere to the end, and others, after beginning their course, fall away. Perseverance is the gift of God, which he does not lavish promiscuously on all, but imparts to whom he pleases. If it is asked how the difference arises—why some steadily persevere, and others prove deficient in steadfastness, we can give no other reason than that the Lord, by his mighty power, strengthens and sustains the former, so that they perish not, while he does not furnish the same assistance to the latter, but leaves them to be monuments of instability.

4. Still it is insisted, that exhortations are vain, warnings superfluous, and rebukes absurd, if the sinner possesses not the power to obey. When similar objections were urged against Augustine, he was obliged to write his book, *De Correptione et Gratia*, where he has fully disposed of them. The substance of his answer to his opponents is this: "O, man! learn from the precept what you ought to do; learn from correction, that it is your own fault you have not the power; and learn in prayer, whence it is that you may receive the power." Very similar is the argument of his book, *De Spiritu et Litera*, in which he shows that God does not measure the precepts of his law by human strength, but, after ordering what is right, freely bestows on his elect the power of fulfilling it. The subject, indeed, does not require a long discussion. For we are not singular in our doctrine, but have Christ and all his apostles with us. Let our opponents, then, consider how they are to come off victorious in a contest which they wage with such antagonists. Christ declares, "without me ye can do nothing," (John xx. 5.) Does he the less censure and chastise those who, without him, did wickedly? Does he the less exhort every man to be intent on good works? How severely does Paul inveigh against the Corinthians for want of charity, (1 Cor. iii. 3;) and yet, at the same time, he prays that charity may be given them by the Lord. In the Epistle to the Romans, he declares that "it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy," (Rom. ix. 16.) Still he ceases not to warn, exhort, and rebuke them. Why then do they not expostulate with God for making sport with men, by

demanding of them things which he alone can give, and chastising them for faults committed through want of his grace? Why do they not admonish Paul to spare those who have it not in their power to will or to run, unless the mercy of God, which has forsaken them, precede? As if the doctrine were not founded on the strongest reason—reason which no serious inquirer can fail to perceive. The extent to which doctrine, and exhortation, and rebuke, are in themselves able to change the mind, is indicated by Paul when he says, “Neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase,” (1 Cor. iii. 7.) In like manner, we see that Moses delivers the precepts of the Law under a heavy sanction, and that the prophets strongly urge and threaten transgressors, though they at the same time confess, that men are wise only when an understanding heart is given them; that it is the proper work of God to circumcise the heart, and to change it from stone into flesh; to write his law on their inward parts; in short, to renew souls so as to give efficacy to doctrine.

5. What purpose, then, is served by exhortations? It is this: As the wicked, with obstinate heart, despise them, they will be a testimony against them when they stand at the judgment-seat of God; nay, they even now strike and lash their consciences. For, however they may petulantly deride, they cannot disapprove them. But what, you will ask, can a miserable mortal do, when softness of heart, which is necessary to obedience, is denied him? I ask, in reply, Why have recourse to evasion, since hardness of heart cannot be imputed to any but the sinner himself? The ungodly, though they would gladly evade the divine admonitions, are forced, whether they will or not, to feel their power. But their chief use is to be seen in the case of believers, in whom the Lord, while he always acts by his Spirit, also omits not the instrumentality of his word, but employs it, and not without effect. Let this, then, be a standing truth, that the whole strength of the godly consists in the grace of God, according to the words of the prophet, “I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an

heart of flesh, that they may walk in my statutes," (Ezek. xi. 19, 20.) But it will be asked, why are they now admonished of their duty, and not rather left to the guidance of the Spirit? Why are they urged with exhortations when they cannot hasten any faster than the Spirit impels them? and why are they chastised, if at any time they go astray, seeing that this is caused by the necessary infirmity of the flesh? "O, man! who art thou that repliest against God?" If, in order to prepare us for the grace which enables us to obey exhortation, God sees meet to employ exhortation, what is there in such an arrangement for you to carp and scoff at? Had exhortations and reprimands no other profit with the godly than to convince them of sin, they could not be deemed altogether useless. Now, when, by the Spirit of God acting within, they have the effect of inflaming their desire of good, of arousing them from lethargy, of destroying the pleasure and honied sweetness of sin, making it hateful and loathsome, who will presume to cavil at them as superfluous?

Should any one wish a clearer reply, let him take the following:—God works in his elect in two ways: inwardly, by his Spirit; outwardly, by his Word. By his Spirit illuminating their minds, and training their hearts to the practice of righteousness, he makes them new creatures, while, by his Word, he stimulates them to long and seek for this renovation. In both, he exerts the might of his hand in proportion to the measure in which he dispenses them. The Word, when addressed to the reprobate, though not effectual for their amendment, has another use. It urges their consciences now, and will render them more inexcusable on the day of judgment. Thus, our Saviour, while declaring that none can come to him but those whom the Father draws, and that the elect come after they have heard and learned of the Father, (John vi. 44, 45,) does not lay aside the office of teacher, but carefully invites those who must be taught inwardly by the Spirit before they can make any profit. The reprobate, again, are admonished by Paul, that the doctrine is not in vain; because, while it is in them a savour of death unto death, it is still a sweet savour unto God, (2 Cor. ii. 16.)



6. The enemies of this doctrine are at great pains in collecting passages of Scripture, as if, unable to accomplish any thing by their weight, they were to overwhelm us by their number. But as in battle, when it is come to close quarters, an unwarlike multitude, how great soever the pomp and show they make, give way after a few blows, and take to flight,<sup>1</sup> so we shall have little difficulty here in disposing of our opponents and their host. All the passages which they pervert in opposing us are very similar in their import; and hence, when they are arranged under their proper heads, one answer will suffice for several; it is not necessary to give a separate consideration to each. Precepts seem to be regarded as their stronghold. These they think so accommodated to our abilities, as to make it follow as a matter of course, that whatever they enjoin we are able to perform. Accordingly, they run over all the precepts, and by them fix the measure of our power. For, say they, when God enjoins meekness, submission, love, chastity, piety, and holiness, and when he forbids anger, pride, theft, uncleanness, idolatry, and the like, he either mocks us, or only requires things which are in our power.

All the precepts which they thus heap together may be divided into three classes. Some enjoin a first conversion unto God, others speak simply of the observance of the law, and others inculcate perseverance in the grace which has been received. We shall first treat of precepts in general, and then proceed to consider each separate class. That the abilities of man are equal to the precepts of the divine law, has long been a common idea, and has some show of plausibility. It is founded, however, on the grossest ignorance of the law: Those who deem it a kind of sacrilege to say, that the observance of the law is impossible, insist, as their

<sup>1</sup> The French is, "Mais c'est comme si un capitaine assembloit force gens qui ne fussent nullement duits à la guerre pour espouvanter son ennemi. Avant que les mettre en œuvre, il feroient grande monstre; mais s'il falloit venir en bataille et joindre contre son ennemi on les feroit fuir du premier coup." But it is as if a captain were to assemble a large body of people, in no wise trained to war, to astonish the enemy. Before coming into action they would make a great show; but if they were to go into battle, and come to close quarters with the enemy, the first stroke would make them fly.

strongest argument, that, if it is so, the Law has been given in vain, (*infra*, Chap. vii. sec. 5.) For they speak just as if Paul had never said anything about the Law. But what, pray, is meant by saying, that the Law "was added because of transgressions;" "by the law is the knowledge of sin;" "I had not known sin but by the law;" "the law entered that the offence might abound?" (Gal. iii. 19; Rom. iii. 20; vii. 7; v. 20.) Is it meant that the Law was to be limited to our strength, lest it should be given in vain? Is it not rather meant that it was placed far above us, in order to convince us of our utter feebleness? Paul indeed declares, that charity is the end and fulfilling of the Law, (1 Tim. i. 5.) But when he prays that the minds of the Thessalonians may be filled with it, he clearly enough acknowledges that the Law sounds in our ears without profit, if God do not implant it thoroughly in our hearts, (1 Thess. iii. 12.)

7. I admit, indeed, that if the Scripture taught nothing else on the subject than that the Law is a rule of life by which we ought to regulate our pursuits, I should at once assent to their opinion; but since it carefully and clearly explains that the use of the Law is manifold, the proper course is to learn from that explanation what the power of the Law is in man. In regard to the present question, while it explains what our duty is, it teaches that the power of obeying it is derived from the goodness of God, and it accordingly urges us to pray that this power may be given us. If there were merely a command and no promise, it would be necessary to try whether our strength were sufficient to fulfil the command; but since promises are annexed, which proclaim not only that aid, but that our whole power is derived from divine grace, they at the same time abundantly testify that we are not only unequal to the observance of the Law, but mere fools in regard to it. Therefore, let us hear no more of a proportion between our ability and the divine precepts, as if the Lord had accommodated the standard of justice which he was to give in the Law to our feeble capacities. We should rather gather from the promises how ill provided we are, having in everything so much need of grace. But say they, Who will believe that the

Lord designed his Law for blocks and stones? There is no wish to make any one believe this. The ungodly are neither blocks nor stones, when, taught by the Law that their lusts are offensive to God, they are proved guilty by their own confession; nor are the godly blocks or stones, when, admonished of their powerlessness, they take refuge in grace. To this effect are the pithy sayings of Augustine, "God orders what we cannot do, that we may know what we ought to ask of him. There is a great utility in precepts, if all that is given to free will is to do greater honour to divine grace. Faith acquires what the Law requires; nay, the Law requires, in order that faith may acquire what is thus required; nay, more, God demands of us faith itself, and finds not what he thus demands, until by giving he makes it possible to find it." Again, he says, "Let God give what he orders, and order what he wills."<sup>1</sup>

8. This will be more clearly seen by again attending to the three classes of precepts to which we above referred. Both in the Law and in the Prophets, God repeatedly calls upon us to turn to him.<sup>2</sup> But, on the other hand, a prophet exclaims, "Turn thou me, and I shall be turned; for thou art the Lord my God. Surely, after that I was turned, I repented." He orders us to circumcise the foreskins of our hearts; but Moses declares, that that circumcision is made by his own hand. In many passages he demands a new heart, but in others he declares that he gives it. As Augustine says, "What God promises, we ourselves do not through choice or nature, but he himself does by grace." The same observation is made, when, in enumerating the rules of Tichonius, he states the third in effect to be—that we distinguish carefully between the Law and the promises, or between the commands and grace, (Augustin. de Doctrina Christiana, Lib. iii.) Let them now go and gather from precepts what man's power of obedience is, when they would destroy the divine grace by which the precepts themselves

<sup>1</sup> August. Enchir. ad Laurent. de Gratia et Liber. Arbit. cap. 16. Homil. 29, in Joann. Ep. 24.

<sup>2</sup> Joel ii. 12; Jer. xxxi. 18; Deut. x. 16; xxx. 6; Ezek. xxxvi. 26; Jer. xxxi. 18. Vid. Calvin. adv. Pighium.



are accomplished. The precepts of the second class are simply those which enjoin us to worship God, to obey and adhere to his will, to do his pleasure, and follow his teaching. But innumerable passages testify that every degree of purity, piety, holiness, and justice, which we possess, is his gift. Of the third class of precepts is the exhortation of Paul and Barnabas to the proselytes, as recorded by Luke; they "persuaded them to continue in the grace of God," (Acts xiii. 43.) But the source from which this power of continuance must be sought is elsewhere explained by Paul, when he says, "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord," (Eph. vi. 10.) In another passage he says, "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption," (Eph. iv. 30.) But as the thing here enjoined could not be performed by man, he prays in behalf of the Thessalonians, that God would count them "worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power," (2 Thess. i. 11.) In the same way, in the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, when treating of alms, he repeatedly commends their good and pious inclination. A little farther on, however, he exclaims, "Thanks be to God, which put the same earnest care into the heart of Titus for you. For indeed he accepted the exhortation," (2 Cor. viii. 16, 17.) If Titus could not even perform the office of being a mouth to exhort others, except in so far as God suggested, how could the others have been voluntary agents in acting, if the Lord Jesus had not directed their hearts?

9. Some, who would be thought more acute, endeavour to evade all these passages, by the quibble, that there is nothing to hinder us from contributing our part, while God, at the same time, supplies our deficiencies. They, moreover, adduce passages from the Prophets, in which the work of our conversion seems to be shared between God and ourselves; "Turn ye unto me, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will turn unto you, saith the Lord of hosts," (Zech. i. 3.) The kind of assistance which God gives us has been shown above, (sect. 7, 8,) and need not now be repeated. One thing only I ask to be conceded to me, that it is vain to

think we have a power of fulfilling the Law, merely because we are enjoined to obey it. Since, in order to our fulfilling the divine precepts, the grace of the Lawgiver is both necessary, and has been promised to us, this much at least is clear, that more is demanded of us than we are able to pay. Nor can any cavil evade the declaration in Jeremiah, that the covenant which God made with his ancient people was broken, because it was only of the letter—that to make it effectual, it was necessary for the Spirit to interpose and train the heart to obedience, (Jer. xxxi. 32.) The opinion we now combat is not aided by the words, “Turn unto me, and I will turn unto you.” The turning there spoken of is not that by which God renews the heart unto repentance; but that in which, by bestowing prosperity, he manifests his kindness and favour, just in the same way as he sometimes expresses his displeasure by sending adversity. The people complaining under the many calamities which befell them, that they were forsaken by God, he answers, that his kindness would not fail them, if they would return to a right course, and to himself, the standard of righteousness. The passage, therefore, is wrested from its proper meaning when it is made to countenance the idea that the work of conversion is divided between God and man, (*supra*, Chap. ii. sec. 27.) We have only glanced briefly at this subject, as the proper place for it will occur when we come to treat of the Law, (Chap. vii. sec. 2 and 3.)

10. The second class of objections is akin to the former. They allege the promises in which the Lord makes a paction with our will. Such are the following: “Seek good, and not evil, that ye may live,” (Amos v. 14.) “If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land: but if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it,” (Isaiah i. 19, 20.) “If thou wilt put away thine abominations out of my sight, then thou shalt not remove,” (Jer. iv. 1.) “It shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and do all the commandments which I command thee this day, that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth,” (Deut. xxviii. 1.)

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to avoid

There are other similar passages, (Lev. xxvi. 3, &c.) They think that the blessings contained in these promises are offered to our will absurdly and in mockery, if it is not in our power to secure or reject them. It is, indeed, an easy matter to indulge in declamatory complaint on this subject, —to say that we are cruelly mocked<sup>1</sup> by the Lord, when he declares that his kindness depends on our will, if we are not masters of our will,—that it would be a strange liberality on the part of God to set his blessings before us, while we have no power of enjoying them,—a strange certainty of promises, which, to prevent their ever being fulfilled, are made to depend on an impossibility. Of promises of this description, which have a condition annexed to them, we shall elsewhere speak, and make it plain that there is nothing absurd in the impossible fulfilment of them. In regard to the matter in hand, I deny that God cruelly mocks us when he invites us to merit blessings which he knows we are altogether unable to merit. The promises being offered alike to believers and to the ungodly, have their use in regard to both. As God by his precepts stings the consciences of the ungodly, so as to prevent them from enjoying their sins while they have no remembrance of his judgments, so, in his promises, he in a manner takes them to witness how unworthy they are of his kindness. Who can deny that it is most just and most becoming in God to do good to those who worship him, and to punish with due severity those who despise his majesty? God, therefore, proceeds in due order, when, though the wicked are bound by the fetters of sin, he lays down the law in his promises, that he will do them good only if they depart from their wickedness. This would be right, though His only object were to let them understand that they are deservedly excluded from the favour due to his true worshippers. On the other hand, as he desires by all means to stir up believers to supplicate his grace, it surely should not seem strange that he attempts to accomplish by promises

<sup>1</sup> The French is, “Et de fait cette raison a grande apparence humaine. Car on peut deduire que ce seroit une cruauté de Dieu,” &c.—And, in fact, humanly speaking, there is great plausibility in this argument. For, it may be maintained, that it would be cruelty in God, &c.



the same thing which, as we have shown, he to their great benefit accomplishes by means of precepts. Being taught by precepts what the will of God is, we are reminded of our wretchedness in being so completely at variance with that will, and, at the same time, are stimulated to invoke the aid of the Spirit to guide us into the right path. But as our indolence is not sufficiently aroused by precepts, promises are added, that they may attract us by their sweetness, and produce a feeling of love for the precept. The greater our desire of righteousness, the greater will be our earnestness to obtain the grace of God. And thus it is, that in the protestations, *if ye be willing, if thou shalt hearken*, the Lord neither attributes to us a full power of willing and hearkening, nor yet mocks us for our impotence.<sup>1</sup>

11. The third class of objections is not unlike the other two. For they produce passages in which God upbraids his people for their ingratitude, intimating that it was not his fault that they did not obtain all kinds of favour from his indulgence. Of such passages, the following are examples: "The Amalekites and the Canaanites are before you, and ye shall fall by the sword: because ye are turned away from the Lord, therefore the Lord will not be with you," (Num. xiv. 43.) "Because ye have done all these works, saith the Lord, and I spake unto you, rising up early and speaking, but ye heard not; and I called you, but ye answered not; therefore will I do unto this house, which is called by my name, wherein ye trust, and unto the place which I gave to you and to your fathers, as I have done to Shiloh," (Jer. vii. 13, 14.) "They obeyed not thy voice, neither walked in thy law; they have done nothing of all that thou commandedst them to do: therefore thou hast caused all this evil to come upon them," (Jer. xxxii. 23.) How, they ask, can such upbraiding be directed against those who have it in their power immediately to reply,—Prosperity was dear to us: we feared adversity; that we

<sup>1</sup> The French adds, "Veu qu'en cela il fait le profit de ses serviteurs et rend les iniques plus damnables;" seeing that by this he promotes the good of his servants, and renders the wicked more deserving of condemnation.

did not, in order to obtain the one and avoid the other, obey the Lord, and listen to his voice, is owing to its not being free for us to do so in consequence of our subjection to the dominion of sin; in vain, therefore, are we upbraided with evils which it was not in our power to escape. But to say nothing of the pretext of necessity, which is but a feeble and flimsy defence of their conduct, can they, I ask, deny their guilt? If they are held convicted of any fault, the Lord is not unjust in upbraiding them for having, by their own perverseness, deprived themselves of the advantages of his kindness. Let them say, then, whether they can deny that their own will is the depraved cause of their rebellion. If they find within themselves a fountain of wickedness, why do they stand declaiming about extraneous causes, with the view of making it appear that they are not the authors of their own destruction? If it be true that it is not for another's faults that sinners are both deprived of the divine favour, and visited with punishment, there is good reason why they should hear these rebukes from the mouth of God. If they obstinately persist in their vices, let them learn in their calamities to accuse and detest their own wickedness, instead of charging God with cruelty and injustice. If they have not manifested docility, let them, under a feeling of disgust at the sins which they see to be the cause of their misery and ruin, return to the right path, and, with serious contrition, confess the very thing of which the Lord by his rebuke reminds them. Of what use those upbraidings of the prophets above quoted are to believers, appears from the solemn prayer of Daniel, as given in his ninth chapter. Of their use in regard to the ungodly, we see an example in the Jews, to whom Jeremiah was ordered to explain the cause of their miseries, though the event could not be otherwise than the Lord had foretold. "Therefore thou shalt speak these words unto them; but they will not hearken unto thee: thou shalt also call unto them; but they will not answer thee," (Jer. vii. 27.) Of what use, then, was it to talk to the deaf? It was, that even against their will they might understand that what they heard was true, and that it was impious blasphemy to transfer the

blame of their wickedness to God, when it resided in themselves.

These few explanations will make it very easy for the reader to disentangle himself from the immense heap of passages (containing both precepts and reprimands) which the enemies of divine grace are in the habit of piling up, that they may thereon erect their statue of free will. The Psalmist upbraids the Jews as "a stubborn and rebellious generation; a generation that set not their heart aright," (Psalm lxxviii. 8;) and in another passage, he exhorts the men of his time, "Harden not your heart," (Psalm xcv. 8.) This implies that the whole blame of the rebellion lies in human depravity. But it is foolish thence to infer, that the heart, the preparation of which is from the Lord, may be equally bent in either direction. The Psalmist says, "I have inclined my heart to perform thy statutes alway," (Psalm cxix. 112;) meaning, that with willing and cheerful readiness of mind he had devoted himself to God. He does not boast, however, that he was the author of that disposition, for in the same psalm he acknowledges it to be the gift of God. We must, therefore, attend to the admonition of Paul, when he thus addresses believers, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure," (Philip. ii. 12, 13.) He ascribes to them a part in acting that they may not indulge in carnal sloth, but by enjoining fear and trembling, he humbles them so as to keep them in remembrance, that the very thing which they are ordered to do is the proper work of God—distinctly intimating, that believers act (if I may so speak) *passively*, in as much as the power is given them from heaven, and cannot in any way be arrogated to themselves. Accordingly, when Peter exhorts us to "add to faith virtue," (2 Pet. i. 5,) he does not concede to us the possession of a second place, as if we could do anything separately. He only arouses the sluggishness of our flesh, by which faith itself is frequently stifled. To the same effect are the words of Paul. He says, "Quench not the Spirit," (1 Thess. v. 19;) because a spirit of sloth, if not guarded against, is ever and anon creeping in upon



believers. But should any thence infer that it is entirely in their own power to foster the offered light, his ignorance will easily be refuted by the fact, that the very diligence which Paul enjoins is derived only from God, (2 Cor. vii. 1.) We are often commanded to purge ourselves of all impurity, though the Spirit claims this as his peculiar office. In fine, that what properly belongs to God is transferred to us only by way of concession, is plain from the words of John, "He that is begotten of God keepeth himself," (1 John v. 18.) The advocates of free will fasten upon the expression as if it implied, that we are kept partly by the power of God, partly by our own, whereas the very keeping of which the Apostle speaks is itself from heaven. Hence, Christ prays his Father to keep us from evil, (John xvii. 15,) and we know that believers, in their warfare against Satan, owe their victory to the armour of God. Accordingly, Peter, after saying, "Ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth," immediately adds by way of correction, "through the Spirit," (1 Pet. i. 22.) In fine, the nothingness of human strength in the spiritual contest is briefly shown by John, when he says, that "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him," (1 John iii. 9.) He elsewhere gives the reason, "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith," (1 John v. 4.)

12. But a passage is produced from the Law of Moses, which seems very adverse to the view now given. After promulgating the Law, he takes the people to witness in these terms: "This commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it," (Deut. xxx. 11, 12, 14.) Certainly, if this is to be understood of mere precepts, I admit that it is of no little importance to the matter in hand. For, though it were easy to evade the difficulty by saying, that the thing here treated of is not the observance of the law, but the facility and readiness of becoming

acquainted with it, some scruple, perhaps, would still remain. The Apostle Paul, however, no mean interpreter, removes all doubt when he affirms, that Moses here spoke of the doctrine of the Gospel, (Rom. x. 8.) If any one is so refractory as to contend that Paul violently wrested the words in applying them to the Gospel, though his hardihood is chargeable with impiety, we are still able, independently of the authority of the Apostle, to repel the objection. For, if Moses spoke of precepts merely, he was only inflating the people with vain confidence. Had they attempted the observance of the law in their own strength, as a matter in which they should find no difficulty, what else could have been the result than to throw them headlong? Where, then, was that easy means of observing the law, when the only access to it was over a fatal precipice?<sup>1</sup> Accordingly, nothing is more certain, than that under these words is comprehended the covenant of mercy, which had been promulgated along with the demands of the law. A few verses before, he had said, "The Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live," (Deut. xxx. 6.) Therefore, the readiness of which he immediately after speaks was placed not in the power of man, but in the protection and help of the Holy Spirit, who mightily performs his own work in our weakness. The passage, however, is not to be understood of precepts simply, but rather of the Gospel promises, which, so far from proving any power in us to fulfil righteousness, utterly disprove it. This is confirmed by the testimony of Paul, when he observes that the Gospel holds forth salvation to us, not under the harsh, arduous, and impossible terms on which the law treats with us, (namely, that those shall obtain it who fulfil all its demands,) but on terms easy, expeditious, and readily obtained. This passage, therefore, tends in no degree to establish the freedom of the human will.

<sup>1</sup> The French is, "Où est-ce que sera cette facilité, veu que notre nature succombe en cet endroit, et n'y a celui qui ne trebusche voulant marcher?" Where is this facility, seeing that our nature here gives way, and there is not a man who in wishing to walk does not tumble?

13. They are wont also to adduce certain passages in which God is said occasionally to try men, by withdrawing the assistance of his grace, and to wait until they turn to him, as in Hosea, "I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face," (Hosea v. 15.) It were absurd, (say they,) that the Lord should wait till Israel should seek his face, if their minds were not flexible, so as to turn in either direction of their own accord. As if anything were more common in the prophetic writings than for God to put on the semblance of rejecting and casting off his people until they reform their lives. But what can our opponents extract from such threats? If they mean to maintain that a people, when abandoned by God, are able of themselves to think of turning unto him, they will do it in the very face of Scripture. On the other hand, if they admit that divine grace is necessary to conversion, why do they dispute with us? But while they admit that grace is so far necessary, they insist on reserving some ability for man. How do they prove it? Certainly not from this nor any similar passage; for it is one thing to withdraw from man, and look to what he will do when thus abandoned and left to himself, and another thing to assist his powers, (whatever they may be,) in proportion to their weakness. What, then, it will be asked, is meant by such expressions? I answer, just the same as if God were to say, Since nothing is gained by admonishing, exhorting, rebuking this stubborn people, I will withdraw for a little, and silently leave them to be afflicted; I shall see whether, after long calamity, any remembrance of me will return, and induce them to seek my face. But by the departure of the Lord to a distance is meant the withdrawal of prophecy. By his waiting to see what men will do is meant that he, while silent, and in a manner hiding himself, tries them for a season with various afflictions. Both he does that he may humble us the more; for we shall sooner be broken than corrected by the strokes of adversity, unless his Spirit train us to docility. Moreover, when the Lord, offended and, as it were, fatigued with our obstinate perverseness, leaves us for a while, (by withdrawing his word, in which he is wont in some degree to manifest his presence,)



and makes trial of what we will do in his absence, from this it is erroneously inferred, that there is some power of free will, the extent of which is to be considered and tried, whereas the only end which he has in view is to bring us to an acknowledgment of our utter nothingness.

14. Another objection is founded on a mode of speaking which is constantly observed both in Scripture and in common discourse. Good works are said to be ours, and we are said to do what is holy and acceptable to God, just as we are said to commit sin. But if sins are justly imputed to us, as proceeding from ourselves, for the same reason (say they) some share must certainly be attributed to us in works of righteousness. It could not be accordant with reason to say, that we do those things which we are incapable of doing of our own motion, God moving us, as if we were stones. These expressions, therefore, it is said, indicate that while, in the matter of grace, we give the first place to God, a secondary place must be assigned to our agency. If the only thing here insisted on were, that good works are termed *ours*, I, in my turn, would reply, that the bread which we ask God to give us is also termed *ours*. What, then, can be inferred from the title of possession, but simply that, by the kindness and free gift of God, that becomes ours which in other respects is by no means due to us? Therefore, let them either ridicule the same absurdity in the Lord's Prayer, or let them cease to regard it as absurd, that good works should be called ours, though our only property in them is derived from the liberality of God. But there is something stronger in the fact, that we are often said in Scripture to worship God, do justice, obey the law, and follow good works. These being proper offices of the mind and will, how can they be consistently referred to the Spirit, and, at the same time, attributed to us, unless there be some concurrence on our part with the divine agency? This difficulty will be easily disposed of if we attend to the manner in which the Holy Spirit acts in the righteous. The similitude with which they invidiously assail us is foreign to the purpose; for who is so absurd as to imagine that movement in man differs in nothing from the impulse given to a stone? Nor can anything of the kind be

inferred from our doctrine. To the natural powers of man we ascribe approving and rejecting, willing and not willing, striving and resisting, viz., approving vanity, rejecting solid good, willing evil and not willing good, striving for wickedness and resisting righteousness. What then does the Lord do? If he sees meet to employ depravity of this description as an instrument of his anger, he gives it whatever aim and direction he pleases, that, by a guilty hand, he may accomplish his own good work. A wicked man thus serving the power of God, while he is bent only on following his own lust, can we compare to a stone, which, driven by an external impulse, is borne along without motion, or sense, or will of its own? We see how wide the difference is. But how stands the case with the godly, as to whom chiefly the question is raised? When God erects his kingdom in them, he, by means of his Spirit, curbs their will, that it may not follow its natural bent, and be carried hither and thither by vagrant lusts; bends, frames, trains, and guides it according to the rule of his justice, so as to incline it to righteousness and holiness, and stablishes and strengthens it by the energy of his Spirit, that it may not stumble or fall. For which reason Augustine thus expresses himself, (*De Corrept. et Gratia*, cap. ii,) "It will be said we are therefore acted upon, and do not act. Nay, you act and are acted upon, and you then act well when you are acted upon by one that is good. The Spirit of God who actuates you is your helper in acting, and bears the name of helper, because you, too, do something." In the former member of this sentence, he reminds us that the agency of man is not destroyed by the motion of the Holy Spirit, because nature furnishes the will which is guided so as to aspire to good. As to the second member of the sentence, in which he says that the very idea of help implies that we also do something, we must not understand it as if he were attributing to us some independent power of action; but not to foster a feeling of sloth, he reconciles the agency of God with our own agency, by saying, that to wish is from nature, to wish well is from grace. Accordingly, he had said a little before, "Did not God assist us, we should not only not be able to conquer, but not able even to fight."

15. Hence it appears that the grace of God (as this name is used when regeneration is spoken of) is the rule of the Spirit, in directing and governing the human will. Govern he cannot, without correcting, reforming, renovating, (hence we say that the beginning of regeneration consists in the abolition of what is ours;) in like manner, he cannot govern without moving, impelling, urging, and restraining. Accordingly, all the actions which are afterwards done are truly said to be wholly his. Meanwhile, we deny not the truth of Augustine's doctrine, that the will is not destroyed, but rather repaired, by grace—the two things being perfectly consistent, viz., that the human will may be said to be renewed when, its vitiosity and perverseness being corrected, it is conformed to the true standard of righteousness, and that, at the same time, the will may be said to be made new, being so vitiated and corrupted that its nature must be entirely changed. There is nothing then to prevent us from saying, that our will does what the Spirit does in us, although the will contributes nothing of itself apart from grace. We must, therefore, remember what we quoted from Augustine, that some men labour in vain to find in the human will some good quality properly belonging to it. Any intermixture which men attempt to make by conjoining the effort of their own will with divine grace is corruption, just as when unwholesome and muddy water is used to dilute wine. But though every thing good in the will is entirely derived from the influence of the Spirit, yet, because we have naturally an innate power of willing, we are not improperly said to do the things of which God claims for himself all the praise; first, because every thing which his kindness produces in us is our own, (only we must understand that it is not of ourselves;) and, secondly, because it is our mind, our will, our study, which are guided by him to what is good.

16. The other passages which they gather together from different quarters will not give much trouble to any person of tolerable understanding, who pays due attention to the explanations already given. They adduce the passage of Genesis, "Unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him," (Gen. iv. 7.) This they interpret of sin, as if the



Lord were promising Cain that the dominion of sin should not prevail over his mind, if he would labour in subduing it. We, however, maintain that it is much more agreeable to the context to understand the words as referring to Abel, it being there the purpose of God to point out the injustice of the envy which Cain had conceived against his brother. And this He does in two ways, by showing, first, that it was vain to think he could, by means of wickedness, surpass his brother in the favour of God, by whom nothing is esteemed but righteousness; and, secondly, how ungrateful he was for the kindness he had already received, in not being able to bear with a brother who had been subjected to his authority. But lest it should be thought that we embrace this interpretation because the other is contrary to our view, let us grant that God does here speak of sin. If so, his words contain either an order or a promise. If an order, we have already demonstrated that this is no proof of man's ability; if a promise, where is the fulfilment of the promise when Cain yielded to the sin over which he ought to have prevailed? They will allege a tacit condition in the promise, as if it were said that he would gain the victory if he contended. This subterfuge is altogether unavailing. For, if the dominion spoken of refers to sin, no man can have any doubt that the form of expression is imperative, declaring not what we are able, but what it is our duty to do, even if beyond our ability. Although both the nature of the case, and the rule of grammatical construction, require that it be regarded as a comparison between Cain and Abel, we think the only preference given to the younger brother was, that the elder made himself inferior by his own wickedness.

17. They appeal, moreover, to the testimony of the Apostle Paul, because he says, "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy," (Rom. ix. 15.) From this they infer, that there is something in will and endeavour, which, though weak in themselves, still, being mercifully aided by God, are not without some measure of success. But if they would attend in sober earnest to the subject there handled by Paul, they would not so rashly pervert his meaning. I am aware

they can quote Origen and Jerome<sup>1</sup> in support of this exposition. To these I might, in my turn, oppose Augustine. But it is of no consequence what they thought, if it is clear what Paul meant. He teaches that salvation is prepared for those only on whom the Lord is pleased to bestow his mercy—that ruin and death await all whom he has not chosen. He had proved the condition of the reprobate by the example of Pharaoh, and confirmed the certainty of gratuitous election by the passage in Moses, “I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy.” Thereafter he concludes, that it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy. If these words are understood to mean that the will or endeavour are not sufficient, because unequal to such a task, the Apostle has not used them very appropriately. We must therefore abandon this absurd mode of arguing, “It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth;”—therefore, there is some will, some running. Paul’s meaning is more simple—there is no will nor running by which we can prepare the way for our salvation—it is wholly of the divine mercy. He indeed says nothing more than he says to Titus, when he writes, “After that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us,” (Titus iii. 4, 5.) Those who argue that Paul insinuated there was some will and some running when he said, “It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth,” would not allow me to argue after the same fashion, that we have done some righteous works, because Paul says that we have attained the divine favour, “not by works of righteousness which we have done.” But if they see a flaw in this mode of arguing, let them open their eyes, and they will see that their own mode is not free from a similar fallacy. The argument which Augustine uses is well founded, “If it is said, ‘It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth,’ because neither will nor running are sufficient; it may, on the other hand, be retorted, it is not ‘of God that showeth mercy,’ because

<sup>1</sup> Orig. Lib. vii. in Epist. ad Rom.—Hieron. Dial. i. in Pelagium.—For the passage in Augustine, see the extract in Book III. chap. xxiv. sec. i.

mercy does not act alone," (August. Ep. 170, ad Vital. See also Enchirid. ad Laurent. cap. 32.) This second proposition being absurd, Augustine justly concludes the meaning of the words to be, that there is no good will in man until it is prepared by the Lord; not that we ought not to will and run, but that both are produced in us by God. Some, with equal unskilfulness, wrest the saying of Paul, "We are labourers together with God," (1 Cor. iii. 9.) There cannot be a doubt that these words apply to ministers only, who are called "labourers with God," not from bringing any thing of their own, but because God makes use of their instrumentality after he has rendered them fit, and provided them with the necessary endowments.

18. They appeal also to Ecclesiasticus, who is well known to be a writer of doubtful authority. But, though we might justly decline his testimony, let us see what he says in support of free will. His words are, "He himself made man from the beginning, and left him in the hand of his counsel; If thou wilt, to keep the commandments, and perform acceptable faithfulness. He hath set fire and water before thee: stretch forth thy hand unto whether thou wilt. Before man is life and death; and whether him liketh shall be given him," (Ecclesiasticus xv. 14-17.) Grant that man received at his creation a power of acquiring life or death; what, then, if we, on the other hand, can reply that he has lost it? Assuredly I have no intention to contradict Solomon, who asserts that "God hath made man upright;" that "they have sought out many inventions," (Eccl. vii. 29.) But since man, by degenerating, has made shipwreck of himself and all his blessings, it certainly does not follow, that every thing attributed to his nature, as originally constituted, applies to it now when vitiated and degenerate. Therefore, not only to my opponents, but to the author of Ecclesiasticus himself, (whoever he may have been,) this is my answer: If you mean to tell man that in himself there is a power of acquiring salvation, your authority with us is not so great as, in the least degree, to prejudice the undoubted word of God; but if only wishing to curb the malignity of the flesh, which, by transferring the blame of its own wickedness to God, is wont to catch



at a vain defence, you say that rectitude was given to man, in order to make it apparent he was the cause of his own destruction, I willingly assent. Only agree with me in this, that it is by his own fault he is stript of the ornaments in which the Lord at first attired him, and then let us unite in acknowledging that what he now wants is a physician, and not a defender.

19. There is nothing more frequent in their mouths than the parable of the traveller who fell among thieves, and was left half dead, (Luke x. 32.) I am aware that it is a common idea with almost all writers, that under the figure of the traveller is represented the calamity of the human race. Hence our opponents argue that man was not so mutilated by the robbery of sin and the devil as not to preserve some remains of his former endowments ; because it is said he was left half dead. For where is the half living, unless some portion of right will and reason remain? First, were I to deny that there is any room for their allegory, what could they say? There can be no doubt that the Fathers invented it contrary to the genuine sense of the parable. Allegories ought to be carried no further than Scripture expressly sanctions: so far are they from forming a sufficient basis to found doctrines upon. And were I so disposed, I might easily find the means of tearing up this fiction by the roots. The Word of God leaves no half life to man, but teaches, that, in regard to life and happiness, he has utterly perished. Paul, when he speaks of our redemption, says not that the half dead are cured, (Eph. ii. 5, 30 ; v. 14,) but that those who were dead are raised up. He does not call upon the half dead to receive the illumination of Christ, but upon those who are asleep and buried. In the same way our Lord himself says, "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God," (John v. 25.) How can they presume to set up a flimsy allegory in opposition to so many clear statements? But be it that this allegory is good evidence, what can they extort out of it? Man is half dead ; therefore there is some soundness in him. True ! he has a mind capable of understanding, though incapable of attaining to heavenly and spiritual

wisdom ; he has some discernment of what is honourable ; he has some sense of the Divinity, though he cannot reach the true knowledge of God. But to what do these amount ? They certainly do not refute the doctrine of Augustine—a doctrine confirmed by the common suffrages even of the Schoolmen, that after the fall, the free gifts on which salvation depends were withdrawn, and natural gifts corrupted and defiled, (*supra*, chap. ii. sec. 2.) Let it stand, therefore, as an indubitable truth, which no engines can shake, that the mind of man is so entirely alienated from the righteousness of God that he cannot conceive, desire, or design any thing but what is wicked, distorted, foul, impure, and iniquitous ; that his heart is so thoroughly envenomed by sin that it can breathe out nothing but corruption and rottenness ; that if some men occasionally make a show of goodness, their mind is ever interwoven with hypocrisy and deceit, their soul inwardly bound with the fetters of wickedness.

## CHAPTER VI.

## REDEMPTION FOR MAN LOST TO BE SOUGHT IN CHRIST.

The parts of this chapter are, I. The excellence of the doctrine of Christ the Redeemer—a doctrine always entertained by the Church, sec. 1. II. Christ, the Mediator in both dispensations, was offered to the faith of the pious Israelites and people of old, as is plain from the institution of sacrifice, the calling of Abraham's family, and the elevation of David and his posterity, sec. 2. III. Hence the consolation, strength, hope, and confidence of the godly under the Law, Christ being offered to them in various ways by their heavenly Father.

*Sections.*

1. The knowledge of God the Creator of no avail without faith in Christ the Redeemer. First reason. Second reason strengthened by the testimony of an Apostle. Conclusion. This doctrine entertained by the children of God in all ages from the beginning of the world. Error of throwing open heaven to the heathen, who know nothing of Christ. The pretexts for this refuted by passages of Scripture. 2.
2. God never was propitious to the ancient Israelites without Christ the Mediator. First reason founded on the institution of sacrifice. Second reason founded on the calling of Abraham. Third reason founded on the elevation of David's family to regal dignity, and confirmed by striking passages of Scripture.
3. Christ the solace ever promised to the afflicted; the banner of faith and hope always erected. This confirmed by various passages of Scripture.
4. The Jews taught to have respect to Christ. This teaching sanctioned by our Saviour himself. The common saying, that God is the object of faith, requires to be explained and modified. Conclusion of this discussion concerning Christ. No saving knowledge of God in the heathen.

1. THE whole human race having been undone in the person of Adam, the excellence and dignity of our origin, as already described, is so far from availing us, that it rather turns to our greater disgrace, until God, who does not ac-



knowledge man when defiled and corrupted by sin as his own work, appear as a Redeemer in the person of his only begotten Son. Since our fall from life unto death, all that knowledge of God the Creator, of which we have discoursed, would be useless, were it not followed up by faith, holding forth God to us as a Father in Christ. The natural course undoubtedly was, that the fabric of the world should be a school in which we might learn piety, and from it pass to eternal life and perfect felicity. But after looking at the perfection beheld wherever we turn our eye, above and below, we are met by the divine malediction, which, while it involves innocent creatures in our fault, of necessity fills our own souls with despair. For although God is still pleased in many ways to manifest his paternal favour towards us, we cannot, from a mere survey of the world, infer that he is a Father. Conscience urging us within, and showing that sin is a just ground for our being forsaken, will not allow us to think that God accounts or treats us as sons. In addition to this are our sloth and ingratitude. Our minds are so blinded that they cannot perceive the truth, and all our senses are so corrupt that we wickedly rob God of his glory. Wherefore, we must conclude with Paul, "After that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe," (1 Cor. i. 21.) By the "wisdom of God," he designates this magnificent theatre of heaven and earth replenished with numberless wonders, the wise contemplation of which should have enabled us to know God. But this we do with little profit; and, therefore, he invites us to faith in Christ,—faith which, by a semblance of foolishness, disgusts the unbeliever. Therefore, although the preaching of the cross is not in accordance with human wisdom, we must, however, humbly embrace it if we would return to God our Maker, from whom we are estranged, that he may again become our Father. It is certain that after the fall of our first parent, no knowledge of God without a Mediator was effectual to salvation. Christ speaks not of his own age merely, but embraces all ages, when he says, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and

Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent," (John xvii. 3.) The more shameful, therefore, is the presumption of those who throw heaven open to the unbelieving and profane, in the absence of that grace which Scripture uniformly describes as the only door by which we enter into life. Should any confine our Saviour's words to the period subsequent to the promulgation of the Gospel, the refutation is at hand; since, on a ground common to all ages and nations, it is declared, that those who are estranged from God, and as such, are under the curse, the children of wrath, cannot be pleasing to God until they are reconciled. To this we may add the answer which our Saviour gave to the Samaritan woman, "Ye worship ye know not what; we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews," (John iv. 22.) By these words, he both charges every Gentile religion with falsehood, and assigns the reason, viz., that under the Law the Redeemer was promised to the chosen people only, and that, consequently, no worship was ever pleasing to God in which respect was not had to Christ. Hence also Paul affirms, that all the Gentiles were "without God," and deprived of the hope of life. Now, since John teaches that there was life in Christ from the beginning, and that the whole world had lost it, (John i. 4,) it is necessary to return to that fountain; and, accordingly, Christ declares that, in as much as he is a propitiator, he is life. And, indeed, the inheritance of heaven belongs to none but the sons of God, (John xv. 6.) Now, it were most incongruous to give the place and rank of sons to any who have not been engrafted into the body of the only begotten Son. And John distinctly testifies that those become the sons of God who believe in his name. But as it is not my intention at present formally to discuss the subject of faith in Christ, it is enough to have thus touched on it in passing.

2. Hence it is that God never showed himself propitious to his ancient people, nor gave them any hope of grace without a Mediator. I say nothing of the sacrifices of the Law, by which believers were plainly and openly taught that salvation was not to be found anywhere but in the expiation which Christ alone completed. All I maintain is,

that the prosperous and happy state of the Church was always founded in the person of Christ. For although God embraced the whole posterity of Abraham in his covenant, yet Paul properly argues, (Gal. iii. 16,) that Christ was truly the seed in which all the nations of the earth were to be blessed, since we know that all who were born of Abraham, according to the flesh, were not accounted the seed. To omit Ishmael and others, how came it that of the two sons of Isaac, the twin brothers, Esau and Jacob, while yet in the womb, the one was chosen and the other rejected? Nay, how came it that the first-born was rejected, and the younger alone admitted? Moreover, how happens it that the majority are rejected? It is plain, therefore, that the seed of Abraham is considered chiefly in one head, and that the promised salvation is not attained without coming to Christ, whose office it is to gather together those which were scattered abroad. Thus the primary adoption of the chosen people depended on the grace of the Mediator. Although it is not expressed in very distinct terms in Moses, it, however, appears to have been commonly known to all the godly. For before a king was appointed over the Israelites, Hannah, the mother of Samuel, describing the happiness of the righteous, speaks thus in her song, "He shall give strength unto his king, and exalt the horn of his anointed;" meaning by these words, that God would bless his Church. To this corresponds the prediction, which is afterwards added, "I will raise me up a faithful priest, — and he shall walk before mine anointed for ever," (1 Sam. ii. 10, 35.) And there can be no doubt that our heavenly Father intended that a living image of Christ should be seen in David and his posterity. Accordingly, exhorting the righteous to fear Him, he bids them "Kiss the Son," (Psalm ii. 12.) Corresponding to this is the passage in the Gospel, "He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father," (John v. 23.) Therefore, though the kingdom was broken up by the revolt of the ten tribes, yet the covenant which God had made in David and his successors behoved to stand, as is also declared by his Prophets, "Howbeit I will not take the whole kingdom out of his hand: but I will make him



prince all the days of his life for David my servant's sake," (1 Kings xi. 34.) The same thing is repeated a second and third time. It is also expressly said, "I will for this afflict the seed of David, but not for ever," (1 Kings xi. 39.) Some time afterwards it was said, "Nevertheless, for David's sake did the Lord his God give him a lamp in Jerusalem, to set up his son after him, and to establish Jerusalem," (1 Kings xv. 4.) And when matters were bordering on destruction, it was again said, "Yet the Lord would not destroy Judah for David his servant's sake, as he had promised to give him alway a light, and to his children," (2 Kings viii. 19.)

The sum of the whole comes to this—David, all others being excluded, was chosen to be the person in whom the good pleasure of the Lord should dwell; as it is said elsewhere, "He forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh;" "Moreover, he refused the tabernacle of Joseph, and chose not the tribe of Ephraim;" "But chose the tribe of Judah, the mount Zion which he loved;" "He chose David also his servant, and took him from the sheepfolds: from following the ewes great with young he brought him to feed Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance," (Ps. lxxviii. 60, 67, 70, 71.) In fine, God, in thus preserving his Church, intended that its security and salvation should depend on Christ as its head. Accordingly, David exclaims, "The Lord is their strength, and he is the saving strength of his anointed;" and then prays, "Save thy people, and bless thine inheritance;" intimating, that the safety of the Church was indissolubly connected with the government of Christ. In the same sense he elsewhere says, "Save, Lord: let the king hear us when we call," (Ps. xx. 9.) These words plainly teach that believers, in applying for the help of God, had their sole confidence in this—that they were under the unseen government of the King. This may be inferred from another psalm, "Save now, I beseech thee, O Lord: Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord," (Ps. cxviii. 25, 26.) Here it is obvious that believers are invited to Christ, in the assurance that they will be safe when entirely in his hand. To the same effect is another prayer, in

which the whole Church implores the divine mercy, "Let thy hand be upon the Man of thy right hand, upon the Son of man, whom thou madest strong (or hast fitted) for thyself," (Ps. lxxx. 17.) For though the author of the psalm laments the dispersion of the whole nation, he prays for its revival in him who is sole Head. After the people were led away into captivity, the land laid waste, and matters to appearance desperate, Jeremiah, lamenting the calamity of the Church, especially complains, that by the destruction of the kingdom the hope of believers was cut off; "The breath of our nostrils, the anointed of the Lord, was taken in their pits, of whom we said, Under his shadow we shall live among the heathen," (Lam. iv. 20.) From all this it is abundantly plain, that as the Lord cannot be propitious to the human race without a Mediator, Christ was always held forth to the holy Fathers under the Law as the object of their faith.

3. Moreover, when comfort is promised in affliction, especially when the deliverance of the Church is described, the banner of faith and hope in Christ is unfurled. "Thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people, even for salvation with thine anointed," says Habakkuk, (iii. 13.) And whenever mention is made in the Prophets of the renovation of the Church, the people are directed to the promise made to David, that his kingdom would be for ever. And there is nothing strange in this, since otherwise there would have been no stability in the covenant. To this purpose is the remarkable prophecy in Isaiah vii. 14. After seeing that the unbelieving king Ahaz repudiated what he had testified regarding the deliverance of Jerusalem from siege and its immediate safety, he passes as it were abruptly to the Messiah, "Behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel;" intimating indirectly, that though the king and his people wickedly rejected the promise offered to them, as if they were bent on causing the faith of God to fail, the covenant would not be defeated—the Redeemer would come in his own time. In fine, all the prophets, to show that God was placable, were always careful to bring forward that kingdom of David, on which redemption and eternal salvation depended. Thus in

Isaiah it is said, "I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David. Behold, I have given him for a witness to the people," (Isa. lv. 3, 4;) intimating, that believers, in calamitous circumstances, could have no hope, had they not this testimony, that God would be ready to hear them. In the same way, to revive their drooping spirits, Jeremiah says, "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely," (Jer. xxiii. 5, 6.) In Ezekiel also it is said, "I will set up one Shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd. And I the Lord will be their God, and my servant David a prince among them: I the Lord have spoken it. And I will make with them a covenant of peace," (Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 24, 25.) And again, after discoursing of this wondrous renovation, he says, "David my servant shall be king over them: and they all shall have one shepherd." "Moreover, I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them," (Ezek. xxxvii. 24-26.) I select a few passages out of many, because I merely wish to impress my readers with the fact, that the hope of believers was ever treasured up in Christ alone. All the other prophets concur in this. Thus Hosea, "Then shall the children of Judah and the children of Israel be gathered together, and appoint themselves one head," (Hosea i. 11.) This he afterwards explains in clearer terms, "Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king," (Hosea iii. 5.) Micah, also speaking of the return of the people, says expressly, "Their king shall pass before them, and the Lord on the head of them," (Micah ii. 13.) So Amos, in predicting the renovation of the people, says, "In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up the ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old," (Amos ix. 11;) in other words, the only banner of salvation was, the exaltation of the family of David to regal splendour, as fulfilled in Christ.



Hence, too, Zechariah, as nearer in time to the manifestation of Christ, speaks more plainly, "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation," (Zech. ix. 9.) This corresponds to the passage already quoted from the Psalms, "The Lord is their strength, and he is the saving health of their anointed." Here salvation is extended from the head to the whole body.

4. By familiarising the Jews with these prophecies, God intended to teach them, that in seeking for deliverance, they should turn their eyes directly towards Christ. And though they had sadly degenerated, they never entirely lost the knowledge of this general principle, that God, by the hand of Christ, would be the deliverer of the Church, as he had promised to David; and that in this way only the free covenant by which God had adopted his chosen people would be fulfilled. Hence it was, that on our Saviour's entry into Jerusalem, shortly before his death, the children shouted, "Hosannah to the son of David," (Matth. xxi. 9.) For there seems to have been a hymn known to all, and in general use, in which they sung, that the only remaining pledge which they had of the divine mercy was the promised advent of a Redeemer. For this reason, Christ tells his disciples to believe in him, in order that they might have a distinct and complete belief in God, "Ye believe in God, believe also in me," (John xiv. 1.) For although, properly speaking, faith rises from Christ to the Father, he intimates, that even when it leans on God, it gradually vanishes away, unless he himself interpose to give it solid strength. The majesty of God is too high to be scaled up to by mortals, who creep like worms on the earth. Therefore, the common saying that God is the object of faith, (Lactantius, Lib. iv. c. 16,) requires to be received with some modification. When Christ is called the image of the invisible God, (Col. i. 15,) the expression is not used without cause, but is designed to remind us that we can have no knowledge of our salvation, until we behold God in Christ. For although the Jewish scribes had by their false glosses darkened what the Prophets had taught concerning the Redeemer, yet Christ assumed it to be a fact, received, as it

were, with public consent, that there was no other remedy in desperate circumstances, no other mode of delivering the Church, than the manifestation of the Mediator. It is true, that the fact adverted to by Paul was not so generally known as it ought to have been, viz., that Christ is the end of the Law, (Rom. x. 4,) though this is both true, and clearly appears both from the Law and the Prophets. I am not now, however, treating of faith, as we shall elsewhere have a fitter place, (Book III. Chap. ii.,) but what I wish to impress upon my readers in this way is, that the first step in piety is, to acknowledge that God is a Father, to defend, govern, and cherish us, until he brings us to the eternal inheritance of his kingdom; that hence it is plain, as we lately observed, there is no saving knowledge of God without Christ, and that, consequently, from the beginning of the world Christ was held forth to all the elect as the object of their faith and confidence. In this sense, Irenæus says, that the Father, who is boundless in himself, is bounded in the Son, because he has accommodated himself to our capacity, lest our minds should be swallowed up by the immensity of his glory, (Irenæus, Lib. iv. cap. 8.) Fanatics, not attending to this, distort a useful sentiment into an impious dream,<sup>1</sup> as if Christ had only a share of the Godhead, as a part taken from a whole; whereas the meaning merely is, that God is comprehended in Christ alone. The saying of John was always true, "Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father," (1 John ii. 23.) For though in old time there were many who boasted that they worshipped the Supreme Deity, the Maker of heaven and earth, yet as they had no Mediator, it was impossible for them truly to enjoy the mercy of God, so as to feel persuaded that he was their Father. Not holding the head, that is, Christ, their knowledge of God was evanescent; and hence they at length fell away to gross and foul superstitions, betraying their ignorance, just as the Turks in the present day, who, though proclaiming, with full throat, that the Creator of heaven and earth is their God, yet by their rejection of Christ, substitute an idol in his place.

<sup>1</sup> French, "reverie infernale."

## CHAPTER VII.

THE LAW GIVEN, NOT TO RETAIN A PEOPLE FOR ITSELF, BUT TO KEEP ALIVE THE HOPE OF SALVATION IN CHRIST UNTIL HIS ADVENT.

The divisions of this chapter are, I. The Moral and Ceremonial Law a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, sec. 1, 2. II. This true of the Moral Law, especially its conditional promises. These given for the best reasons. In what respect the observance of the Moral Law is said to be impossible, sec. 3-5. III. Of the threefold office and use of the Moral Law, sec. 6-12. Antinomians refuted, sec. 13. IV. What the abrogation of the Law, Moral and Ceremonial, sec. 14-17.

*Sections.*

1. The whole system of religion delivered by the hand of Moses, in many ways pointed to Christ. This exemplified in the case of sacrifices, ablutions, and an endless series of ceremonies. This proved, 1. By the declared purpose of God ; 2. By the nature of the ceremonies themselves ; 3. From the nature of God ; 4. From the grace offered to the Jews ; 5. From the consecration of the priests.
2. Proof continued. 6. From a consideration of the kingdom erected in the family of David. 7. From the end of the ceremonies. 8. From the end of the Moral Law.
3. A more ample exposition of the last proof. The Moral Law leads believers to Christ. Showing the perfect righteousness required by God, it convinces us of our inability to fulfil it. It thus denies us life, adjudges us to death, and so urges us to seek deliverance in Christ.
4. The promises of the Law, though conditional, founded on the best reason. This reason explained.
5. No inconsistency in giving a law, the observance of which is impossible. This proved from reason, and confirmed by Scripture. Another confirmation from Augustine.
6. A consideration of the office and use of the Moral Law shows that it leads to Christ. The Law, while it describes the righteousness which is acceptable to God, proves that every man is unrighteous.
7. The Law fitly compared to a mirror, which shows us our wretchedness. This derogates not in any degree from its excellence.



8. When the Law discloses our guilt, we should not despond, but flee to the mercy of God. How this may be done.
9. Confirmation of the first use of the Moral Law from various passages in Augustine.
10. A second use of the Law is to curb sinners. This most necessary for the good of the community at large; and this in respect not only of the reprobate, but also of the elect, previous to regeneration. This confirmed by the authority of an Apostle.
11. The Law showing our wretchedness, disposes us to admit the remedy. It also tends to keep us in our duty. Confirmation from general experience.
12. The third and most appropriate use of the Law respects the elect.
  1. It instructs and teaches them to make daily progress in doing the will of God.
  2. Urges them by exhortation to obedience.
 Testimony of David. How he is to be reconciled with the Apostle.
13. The profane heresy of the Antinomians must be exploded. Argument founded on a passage in David, and another in Moses.
14. Last part of the chapter treating of the abrogation of the Law. In what respect any part of the Moral Law abrogated.
15. The curse of the Law how abrogated.
16. Of the abrogation of the Ceremonial Law in regard to the observance only.
17. The reason assigned by the Apostle applicable not to the Moral Law, but to ceremonial observances only. These abrogated, not only because they separated the Jews from the Gentiles, but still more because they were a kind of formal instruments to attest our guilt and impurity. Christ, by destroying these, is justly said to have taken away the handwriting that was against us, and nailed it to his cross.

1. FROM the whole course of the observations now made, we may infer, that the Law was not superadded about four hundred years after the death of Abraham in order that it might lead the chosen people away from Christ, but, on the contrary, to keep them in suspense until his advent; to inflame their desire, and confirm their expectation, that they might not become dispirited by the long delay. By the Law, I understand not only the Ten Commandments, which contain a complete rule of life, but the whole system of religion delivered by the hand of Moses. Moses was not appointed as a Lawgiver, to do away with the blessing promised to the race of Abraham; nay, we see that he is constantly remind-

ing the Jews of the free covenant which had been made with their fathers, and of which they were heirs; as if he had been sent for the purpose of renewing it. This is most clearly manifested by the ceremonies. For what could be more vain or frivolous than for men to reconcile themselves to God, by offering him the foul odour produced by burning the fat of beasts? or to wipe away their own impurities by besprinkling themselves with water or blood? In short, the whole legal worship (if considered by itself apart from the types and shadows of corresponding truth) is a mere mockery. Wherefore, both in Stephen's address, (Acts vii. 44,) and in the Epistle to the Hebrews, great weight is justly given to the passage in which God says to Moses, "Look that thou make them after the pattern which was showed thee in the mount," (Exod. xxv. 40.) Had there not been some spiritual end to which they were directed, the Jews, in the observance of them, would have deluded themselves as much as the Gentiles in their vanities. Profane men, who have never made religion their serious study, cannot bear without disgust to hear of such a multiplicity of rites. They not merely wonder why God fatigued his ancient people with such a mass of ceremonies, but they despise and ridicule them as childish toys. This they do, because they attend not to the end; from which, if the legal figures are separated, they cannot escape the charge of vanity. But the type shows that God did not enjoin sacrifice, in order that he might occupy his worshippers with earthly exercises, but rather that he might raise their minds to something higher. This is clear even from His own nature. Being a spirit, he is delighted only with spiritual worship. The same thing is testified by the many passages in which the Prophets accuse the Jews of stupidity, for imagining that mere sacrifices have any value in the sight of God. Did they by this mean to derogate in any respect from the Law? By no means; but as interpreters of its true meaning, they wished in this way to turn the attention of the people to the end which they ought to have had in view, but from which they generally wandered. From the grace offered to the Jews, we may certainly infer, that the law was not a stranger

to Christ. Moses declared the end of the adoption of the Israelites to be, that they should be "a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation," (Exod. xix. 6.) This they could not attain, without a greater and more excellent atonement than the blood of beasts. For what could be less in accordance with reason, than that the sons of Adam, who, from hereditary taint, are all born the slaves of sin, should be raised to royal dignity, and in this way made partakers of the glory of God, if the noble distinction were not derived from some other source? How, moreover, could the priestly office exist in vigour among those whose vices rendered them abominable in the sight of God, if they were not consecrated in a holy head? Wherefore, Peter elegantly transposes the words of Moses, teaching that the fulness of grace, of which the Jews had a foretaste under the Law, is exhibited in Christ, "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood," (1 Pet. ii. 9.) The transposition of the words intimates that those to whom Christ has appeared in the Gospel, have obtained more than their fathers, inasmuch as they are all endued with priestly and royal honour, and can, therefore, trusting to their Mediator, appear with boldness in the presence of God.

2. And it is to be observed, by the way, that the kingdom, which was at length erected in the family of David, is part of the Law, and is comprehended under the dispensation of Moses; whence it follows, that, as well in the whole tribe of Levi as in the posterity of David, Christ was exhibited to the eyes of the Israelites as in a double mirror. For, as I lately observed, (sec. i.,) in no other way could those who were the slaves of sin and death, and defiled with corruption, be either kings or priests. Hence appears the perfect truth of Paul's statement, "The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ," "till the seed should come to whom the promise was made," (Gal. iii. 24, 19.) For Christ not yet having been made familiarly known to the Jews, they were like children whose weakness could not bear a full knowledge of heavenly things. How they were led to Christ by the ceremonial law has already been adverted to, and may be made more intelligible by several passages in the Prophets.



Although they were required, in order to appease God, to approach him daily with new sacrifices, yet Isaiah promises, that all their sins would be expiated by one single sacrifice, and with this Daniel concurs, (Is. liii. 5 ; Dan. ix. 26, 27.) The priests appointed from the tribe of Levi entered the sanctuary, but it was once said of a single priest, "The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek," (Ps. cx. 4.) The unction of oil was then visible, but Daniel in vision declares that there will be another unction. Not to dwell on this, the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews proves clearly, and at length, from the fourth to the eleventh chapter, that ceremonies were vain, and of no value, unless as bringing us to Christ. In regard to the Ten Commandments, we must, in like manner, attend to the statement of Paul, that "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth," (Rom. x. 4;) and, again, that ministers of the new testament were "not of the letter, but of the spirit : for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life," (2 Cor. iii. 6.) The former passage intimates, that it is in vain to teach righteousness by precept, until Christ bestow it by free imputation, and the regeneration of the Spirit. Hence he properly calls Christ the end or fulfilling of the Law, because it would avail us nothing to know what God demands, did not Christ come to the succour of those who are labouring, and oppressed under an intolerable yoke and burden. In another place, he says that the Law "was added because of transgressions," (Gal. iii. 19,) that it might humble men under a sense of their condemnation. Moreover, inasmuch as this is the only true preparation for Christ, the statements, though made in different words, perfectly agree with each other. But because he had to dispute with perverse teachers, who pretended that men merited justification by the works of the Law, he was sometimes obliged, in refuting their error, to speak of the Law in a more restricted sense, merely as law, though, in other respects, the covenant of free adoption is comprehended under it.

3. But in order that a sense of guilt may urge us to seek for pardon, it is of importance to know how our being in-

structed in the Moral Law renders us more inexcusable. If it is true, that a perfect righteousness is set before us in the Law, it follows, that the complete observance of it is perfect righteousness in the sight of God; that is, a righteousness by which a man may be deemed and pronounced righteous at the divine tribunal. Wherefore Moses, after promulgating the Law, hesitates not to call heaven and earth to witness, that he had set life and death, good and evil, before the people. Nor can it be denied, that the reward of eternal salvation, as promised by the Lord, awaits the perfect obedience of the Law, (Deut. xxx. 19.) Again, however, it is of importance to understand in what way we perform that obedience for which we justly entertain the hope of that reward. For of what use is it to see that the reward of eternal life depends on the observance of the Law, unless it moreover appears whether it be in our power in that way to attain to eternal life? Herein, then, the weakness of the Law is manifested; for, in none of us is that righteousness of the Law manifested, and, therefore, being excluded from the promises of life, we again fall under the curse. I state not only what happens, but what must necessarily happen. The doctrine of the Law transcending our capacity, a man may indeed look from a distance at the promises held forth, but he cannot derive any benefit from them. The only thing, therefore, remaining for him is, from their excellence to form a better estimate of his own misery, while he considers that the hope of salvation is cut off, and he is threatened with certain death. On the other hand, those fearful denunciations which strike not at a few individuals, but at every individual without exception, rise up; rise up, I say, and, with inexorable severity, pursue us; so that nothing but instant death is presented by the Law.

4. Therefore, if we look merely to the Law, the result must be despondency, confusion, and despair, seeing that by it we are all cursed and condemned, while we are kept far away from the blessedness which it holds forth to its observers. Is the Lord, then, you will ask, only sporting with us? Is it not the next thing to mockery, to hold out the hope of happiness, to invite and exhort us to it, to declare that it is

set before us, while all the while the entrance to it is precluded and quite shut up? I answer, Although the promises, in so far as they are conditional, depend on a perfect obedience of the Law, which is nowhere to be found, they have not, however, been given in vain. For when we have learned, that the promises would be fruitless and unavailing, did not God accept us of his free goodness, without any view to our works, and when, having so learned, we, by faith, embrace the goodness thus offered in the gospel, the promises, with all their annexed conditions, are fully accomplished. For God, while bestowing all things upon us freely, crowns his goodness by not disdaining our imperfect obedience; forgiving its deficiencies, accepting it as if it were complete, and so bestowing upon us the full amount of what the Law has promised. But as this point will be more fully discussed in treating of justification by faith, we shall not follow it further at present.

5. What has been said as to the impossible observance of the Law, it will be proper briefly to explain and confirm, the general opinion being, that nothing can be more absurd. Hence Jerome has not hesitated to denounce anathema against it.<sup>1</sup> (What Jerome thought, I care not; let us inquire what is the truth. I will not here enter into a long and intricate discussion on the various kinds of possibility. By impossible, I mean, that which never was, and, being prevented by the ordination and decree of God, never will be. I say, that if we go back to the remotest period, we shall not find a single saint who, clothed with a mortal body, ever attained to such perfection as to love the Lord with all his heart, and soul, and mind, and strength; and, on the other hand, not one who has not felt the power of concupiscence. Who can deny this? I am aware, indeed, of a kind of saints whom a foolish superstition imagines, and whose purity the angels of heaven scarcely equal. This, however, is repugnant both to Scripture and experience. But I say further, that no saint ever will attain to perfection, so long as he is

<sup>1</sup> See among the works of Justin. Quæst. 103; and Hieronymus ad Ctesiphont adv. Pelegianos, where he seems to admit and deny the same proposition.



in the body. Scripture bears clear testimony to this effect : “There is no man that sinneth not,” saith Solomon, (1 Kings viii. 46.) David says, “In thy sight shall no man living be justified,” (Psalm cxliii. 2.) Job also, in numerous passages, affirms the same thing. But the clearest of all is Paul, who declares that “the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh,” (Gal. v. 17.) And he proves, that “as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse,” for the simple reason, that it is written, “Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them,” (Gal. iii. 10 ; Deut. xxvii. 26;) intimating, or rather assuming it as confessed, that none can so continue. But whatever has been declared by Scripture must be regarded as perpetual, and hence necessary. The Pelagians annoyed Augustine with the sophism, that it was insulting to God to hold, that he orders more than believers are able, by his grace, to perform ; and he, in order to evade it, acknowledged that the Lord was able, if he chose, to raise a mortal man to angelic purity ; but that he had never done, and never would do it, because so the Scripture had declared, (Augustine, *Lib. de Nat. et Grat.*) This I deny not : but I add, that there is no use in absurdly disputing concerning the power of God in opposition to his truth ; and therefore there is no ground for cavilling, when it is said that that thing cannot be, which the Scriptures declare will never be. But if it is the word that is objected to, I refer to the answer which our Saviour gave to his disciples when they asked, “Who then can be saved ?” “With men,” said he, “this is impossible ; but with God all things are possible,” (Matth. xix. 25.) Augustine argues in the most convincing manner, that while in the flesh, we never can give God the love which we owe him. “Love so follows knowledge, that no man can perfectly love God who has not previously a full comprehension of his goodness,” (Augustin. *de Spiritu et Litera*, towards the end, and elsewhere.) So long as we are pilgrims in the world, we see through a glass darkly, and therefore our love is imperfect. Let it therefore be held incontrovertible, that, in consequence of the feebleness of our nature, it is impossible for us, so long as we are in the flesh,

to fulfil the law. This will also be proved elsewhere from the writings of Paul, (Rom. viii. 3.)<sup>1</sup>

6. That the whole matter may be made clearer, let us take a succinct view of the office and use of the Moral Law. Now, this office and use seems to me to consist of three parts. First, by exhibiting the righteousness of God,—in other words, the righteousness which alone is acceptable to God,—it admonishes every one of his own unrighteousness, certiorates, convicts, and finally condemns him. This is necessary, in order that man, who is blind and intoxicated with self-love, may be brought at once to know and to confess his weakness and impurity. For until his vanity is made perfectly manifest, he is puffed up with infatuated confidence in his own powers, and never can be brought to feel their feebleness so long as he measures them by a standard of his own choice. So soon, however, as he begins to compare them with the requirements of the Law, he has something to tame his presumption. How high soever his opinion of his own powers may be, he immediately feels that they pant under the heavy load, then totter and stumble, and finally fall and give way. He, then, who is schooled by the Law, lays aside the arrogance which formerly blinded him. In like manner must he be cured of pride, the other disease under which we have said that he labours. So long as he is permitted to appeal to his own judgment, he substitutes a hypocritical for a real righteousness, and, contented with this, sets up certain factitious observances in opposition to the grace of God. But after he is forced to weigh his conduct in the balance of the Law, renouncing all dependence on this fancied righteousness, he sees that he is at an infinite distance from holiness, and, on the other hand, that he teems with innumerable vices of which he formerly seemed free. The recesses in which concupiscence lies hid are so deep and tortuous that they easily elude our view; and hence the Apostle had good reason for saying, “I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.” For, if it be not brought forth from its lurking-

<sup>1</sup> Book II. chap. xii. sec. 4; and Book III. chap. iv. sec. 27; and chap. xi. sec. 23

places, it miserably destroys in secret before its fatal sting is discerned.

7. Thus the Law is a kind of mirror. As in a mirror we discover any stains upon our face, so in the Law we behold, first, our impotence; then, in consequence of it, our iniquity; and, finally, the curse, as the consequence of both. He who has no power of following righteousness is necessarily plunged in the mire of iniquity, and this iniquity is immediately followed by the curse. Accordingly, the greater the transgression of which the Law convicts us, the severer the judgment to which we are exposed. To this effect is the Apostle's declaration, that "by the law is the knowledge of sin," (Rom. iii. 20.) By these words, he only points out the first office of the Law as experienced by sinners not yet regenerated. In conformity to this, it is said, "the law entered that the offence might abound;" and, accordingly, that it is "the ministration of death;" that it "worketh wrath" and kills, (Rom. v. 20; 2 Cor. iii. 7; Rom. iv. 15.) For there cannot be a doubt that the clearer the consciousness of guilt, the greater the increase of sin; because then to transgression a rebellious feeling against the Lawgiver is added. All that remains for the Law, is to arm the wrath of God for the destruction of the sinner; for by itself it can do nothing but accuse, condemn, and destroy him. Thus Augustine says, "If the Spirit of grace be absent, the law is present only to convict and slay us."<sup>1</sup> But to say this neither insults the law, nor derogates in any degree from its excellence. Assuredly, if our whole will were formed and disposed to obedience, the mere knowledge of the law would be sufficient for salvation; but since our carnal and corrupt nature is at enmity with the Divine law, and is in no degree amended by its discipline, the consequence is, that the law which, if it had been properly attended to, would have given life, becomes the occasion of sin and death. When all are convicted of transgression, the more it declares the righteousness of God, the more, on the

<sup>1</sup> August. de Corrept. et Gratia. Ambros. Lib. i. de Jac. et cap. vi. de Vita Beat.



other hand, it discloses our iniquity; the more certainly it assures us that life and salvation are treasured up as the reward of righteousness, the more certainly it assures us that the unrighteous will perish. So far, however, are these qualities from throwing disgrace on the Law, that their chief tendency is to give a brighter display of the divine goodness. For they show that it is only our weakness and depravity that prevents us from enjoying the blessedness which the law openly sets before us. Hence additional sweetness is given to divine grace, which comes to our aid without the law, and additional loveliness to the mercy which confers it, because they proclaim that God is never weary in doing good, and in loading us with new gifts.

8. But while the unrighteousness and condemnation of all are attested by the law, it does not follow (if we make the proper use of it) that we are immediately to give up all hope and rush headlong on despair. No doubt, it has some such effect upon the reprobate, but this is owing to their obstinacy. With the children of God the effect is different. The Apostle testifies that the law pronounces its sentence of condemnation in order "that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God," (Rom. iii. 19.) In another place, however, the same Apostle declares, that "God hath concluded them all in unbelief;" not that he might destroy all, or allow all to perish, but that "he might have mercy upon all," (Rom. xi. 32 :) in other words, that divesting themselves of an absurd opinion of their own virtue, they may perceive how they are wholly dependent on the hand of God; that feeling how naked and destitute they are, they may take refuge in his mercy, rely upon it, and cover themselves up entirely with it; renouncing all righteousness and merit, and clinging to mercy alone, as offered in Christ to all who long and look for it in true faith. In the precepts of the law, God is seen as the rewarder only of perfect righteousness, (a righteousness of which all are destitute,) and, on the other hand, as the stern avenger of wickedness. But in Christ his countenance beams forth full of grace and gentleness towards poor unworthy sinners.

9. There are many passages in Augustine, as to the utility

of the law in leading us to implore Divine assistance. Thus he writes to Hilary,<sup>1</sup> "The law orders, that we, after attempting to do what is ordered, and so feeling our weakness under the law, may learn to implore the help of grace." In like manner, he writes to Asellius, "The utility of the law is, that it convinces man of his weakness, and compels him to apply for the medicine of grace, which is in Christ." In like manner, he says to Innocentius Romanus, "The law orders; grace supplies the power of acting." Again, to Valentinus, "God enjoins what we cannot do, in order that we may know what we have to ask of him." Again, "The law was given, that it might make you guilty—being made guilty, might fear; fearing, might ask indulgence, not presume on your own strength." Again, "The law was given, in order to convert a great into a little man—to show that you have no power of your own for righteousness; and might thus, poor, needy, and destitute, flee to grace." He afterwards thus addresses the Almighty, "So do, O Lord, so do, O merciful Lord; command what cannot be fulfilled; nay, command what cannot be fulfilled, unless by thy own grace: so that when men feel they have no strength in themselves to fulfil it, every mouth may be stopped, and no man seem great in his own eyes. Let all be little ones; let the whole world become guilty before God." But I am forgetting myself in producing so many passages, since this holy man wrote a distinct treatise, which he entitled *De Spiritu et Litera*. The other branch of this first use he does not describe so distinctly, either because he knew that it depended on the former, or because he was not so well aware of it, or because he wanted words in which he might distinctly and clearly explain its proper meaning. But even in the reprobate themselves, this first office of the law is not altogether wanting. They do not, indeed, proceed so far with the children of God as, after the flesh is cast down, to be renewed in the inner man, and revive again, but stunned by the first terror, give way to

<sup>1</sup> August. Ep. 89, Quæst. 2; Ad Assell. Ep. 200; Ad Innocent. Ep. 95; Lib. de Corrept. et Gratia ad Valent.; In Ps. lxx. et cxviii.; Item, Concio. 27.

despair. Still it tends to manifest the equity of the Divine judgment, when their consciences are thus heaved upon the waves. They would always willingly carp at the judgment of God; but now, though that judgment is not manifested, still the alarm produced by the testimony of the law and of their conscience bespeaks their deserts.

10. The second office of the Law is, by means of its fearful denunciations and the consequent dread of punishment, to curb those who, unless forced, have no regard for rectitude and justice. Such persons are curbed, not because their mind is inwardly moved and affected, but because, as if a bridle were laid upon them, they refrain their hands from external acts, and internally check the depravity which would otherwise petulantly burst forth. It is true, they are not on this account either better or more righteous in the sight of God. For although restrained by terror or shame, they dare not proceed to what their mind has conceived, nor give full license to their raging lust, their heart is by no means trained to fear and obedience. Nay, the more they restrain themselves, the more they are inflamed, the more they rage and boil, prepared for any act or outbreak whatsoever, were it not for the terror of the law. And not only so, but they thoroughly detest the law itself, and execrate the Lawgiver; so that if they could, they would most willingly annihilate him, because they cannot bear either his ordering what is right, or his avenging the despisers of his Majesty. The feeling of all who are not yet regenerate, though in some more, in others less lively, is, that in regard to the observance of the law, they are not led by voluntary submission, but dragged by the force of fear. Nevertheless, this forced and extorted righteousness is necessary for the good of society, its peace being secured by a provision but for which all things would be thrown into tumult and confusion. Nay, this tuition is not without its use, even to the children of God, who, previous to their effectual calling, being destitute of the Spirit of holiness, freely indulge the lusts of the flesh. When, by the fear of Divine vengeance, they are deterred from open outburakings, though, from not being subdued in mind, they profit little at present, still they are in



some measure trained to bear the yoke of righteousness, so that when they are called, they are not like mere novices, studying a discipline of which previously they had no knowledge. This office seems to be especially in the view of the Apostle, when he says, "That the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, for whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for men-stealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine," (1 Tim. i. 9, 10.) He thus indicates that it is a restraint on unruly lusts that would otherwise burst all bonds.

11. To both may be applied the declaration of the Apostle in another place, that "The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ," (Gal. iii. 24;) since there are two classes of persons, whom by its training it leads to Christ. Some, (of whom we spoke in the first place,) from excessive confidence in their own virtue or righteousness, are unfit to receive the grace of Christ, until they are completely humbled. This the law does by making them sensible of their misery, and so disposing them to long for what they previously imagined they did not want. Others have need of a bridle to restrain them from giving full scope to their passions, and thereby utterly losing all desire after righteousness. For where the Spirit of God rules not, the lusts sometimes so burst forth, as to threaten to drown the soul subjected to them in forgetfulness and contempt of God; and so they would, did not God interpose with this remedy. Those, therefore, whom he has destined to the inheritance of his kingdom, if he does not immediately regenerate, he, through the works of the law, preserves in fear, against the time of his visitation, not, indeed, that pure and chaste fear which his children ought to have, but a fear useful to the extent of instructing them in true piety according to their capacity. Of this we have so many proofs, that there is not the least need of an example. For all who have remained for some time in ignorance of God will confess, as the result of their own experience, that the law had the effect of keeping them in

some degree in the fear and reverence of God, till, being regenerated by his Spirit, they began to love him from the heart.

12. The third use of the Law (being also the principal use, and more closely connected with its proper end) has respect to believers in whose hearts the Spirit of God already flourishes and reigns. For although the Law is written and engraven on their hearts by the finger of God, that is, although they are so influenced and actuated by the Spirit, that they desire to obey God, there are two ways in which they still profit in the Law. For it is the best instrument for enabling them daily to learn with greater truth and certainty what that will of the Lord is which they aspire to follow, and to confirm them in this knowledge; just as a servant who desires with all his soul to approve himself to his master, must still observe, and be careful to ascertain his master's dispositions, that he may comport himself in accommodation to them. Let none of us deem ourselves exempt from this necessity, for none have as yet attained to such a degree of wisdom, as that they may not, by the daily instruction of the Law, advance to a purer knowledge of the Divine will. Then, because we need not doctrine merely, but exhortation also, the servant of God will derive this further advantage from the Law: by frequently meditating upon it, he will be excited to obedience, and confirmed in it, and so drawn away from the slippery paths of sin. In this way must the saints press onward, since, however great the alacrity with which, under the Spirit, they hasten toward righteousness, they are retarded by the sluggishness of the flesh, and make less progress than they ought. The Law acts like a whip to the flesh, urging it on as men do a lazy sluggish ass. Even in the case of a spiritual man, inasmuch as he is still burdened with the weight of the flesh, the Law is a constant stimulus, pricking him forward when he would indulge in sloth. David had this use in view when he pronounced this high eulogium on the Law, "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure,

enlightening the eyes," (Ps. xix. 7, 8.) Again, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path," (Ps. cxix. 105.) The whole psalm abounds in passages to the same effect. Such passages are not inconsistent with those of Paul, which show not the utility of the law to the regenerate, but what it is able of itself to bestow. The object of the Psalmist is to celebrate the advantages which the Lord, by means of his law, bestows on those whom he inwardly inspires with a love of obedience. And he adverts not to the mere precepts, but also to the promise annexed to them, which alone makes that sweet which in itself is bitter. For what is less attractive than the law, when, by its demands and threatenings, it overawes the soul, and fills it with terror? David specially shows that in the law he saw the Mediator, without whom it gives no pleasure or delight.

13. Some unskilful persons, from not attending to this, boldly discard the whole law of Moses, and do away with both its Tables, imagining it unchristian to adhere to a doctrine which contains the ministration of death. Far from our thoughts be this profane notion. Moses has admirably shown that the Law, which can produce nothing but death in sinners, ought to have a better and more excellent effect upon the righteous. When about to die, he thus addressed the people, "Set your hearts unto all the words which I testify among you this day, which ye shall command your children to observe to do, all the words of this law. For it is not a vain thing for you; because it is your life," (Deut. xxxii. 46, 47.) If it cannot be denied that it contains a perfect pattern of righteousness, then, unless we ought not to have any proper rule of life, it must be impious to discard it. There are not various rules of life, but one perpetual and inflexible rule; and, therefore, when David describes the righteous as spending their whole lives in meditating on the Law, (Psalm i. 2,) we must not confine to a single age, an employment which is most appropriate to all ages, even to the end of the world. Nor are we to be deterred or to shun its instructions, because the holiness which it prescribes is stricter than we are able to render, so long as we hear about the



prison of the body. It does not now perform toward us the part of a hard taskmaster, who will not be satisfied without full payment ; but, in the perfection to which it exhorts us, points out the goal at which, during the whole course of our lives, it is not less our interest than our duty to aim. It is well if we thus press onward. Our whole life is a race, and after we have finished our course, the Lord will enable us to reach that goal to which, at present, we can only aspire in wish.

14. Since, in regard to believers, the law has the force of exhortation, not to bind their consciences with a curse, but by urging them, from time to time, to shake off sluggishness and chastise imperfection,—many, when they would express this exemption from the curse, say, that in regard to believers the Law (I still mean the Moral Law) is abrogated : not that the things which it enjoins are no longer right to be observed, but only that it is not to believers what it formerly was ; in other words, that it does not, by terrifying and confounding their consciences, condemn and destroy. It is certainly true that Paul shows, in clear terms, that there is such an abrogation of the Law. And that the same was preached by our Lord appears from this, that he would not have refuted the opinion of his destroying the Law, if it had not been prevalent among the Jews. Since such an opinion could not have arisen at random without some pretext, there is reason to presume that it originated in a false interpretation of his doctrine, in the same way in which all errors generally arise from a perversion of the truth. But lest we should stumble against the same stone, let us distinguish accurately between what has been abrogated in the Law, and what still remains in force. When the Lord declares, that he came not to destroy the Law, but to fulfil, (Matth. v. 17 ;) that until heaven and earth pass away, not one jot or tittle shall remain unfulfilled ; he shows that his advent was not to derogate, in any degree, from the observance of the Law. And justly, since the very end of his coming was to remedy the transgression of the Law. Therefore, the doctrine of the Law has not been infringed by Christ, but remains, that, by teaching, admonishing, rebuking, and correcting, it may fit and prepare us for every good work.

15. What Paul says, as to the abrogation of the Law, evidently applies not to the Law itself, but merely to its power of constraining the conscience. For the Law not only teaches, but also imperiously demands. If obedience is not yielded, nay, if it is omitted in any degree, it thunders forth its curse. For this reason, the Apostle says, that "as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them," (Gal. iii. 10; Deut. xxvii. 26.) Those he describes as under the works of the Law, who do not place righteousness in that forgiveness of sins by which we are freed from the rigour of the Law. He therefore shows, that we must be freed from the fetters of the Law, if we would not perish miserably under them. But what fetters? Those of rigid and austere exaction, which remits not one iota of the demand, and leaves no transgression unpunished. To redeem us from this curse, Christ was made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree, (Deut. xxi. 23, compared with Gal. iii. 13, iv. 4.) In the following chapter, indeed, he says, that "Christ was made under the law, in order that he might redeem those who are under the law;" but the meaning is the same. For he immediately adds, "That we might receive the adoption of sons." What does this mean? That we might not be, all our lifetime, subject to bondage, having our consciences oppressed with the fear of death. Meanwhile, it must ever remain an indubitable truth, that the Law has lost none of its authority, but must always receive from us the same respect and obedience.

16. The case of ceremonies is different, these having been abrogated not in effect but in use only. Though Christ by his advent put an end to their use, so far is this from derogating from their sacredness, that it rather commends and illustrates it. For as these ceremonies would have given nothing to God's ancient people but empty show, if the power of Christ's death and resurrection had not been prefigured by them,—so, if the use of them had not ceased, it would, in the present day, be impossible to understand for what purpose they were instituted. Accordingly, Paul, in

order to prove that the observance of them was not only superfluous, but pernicious also, says that they "are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ," (Col. ii. 17.) We see, therefore, that the truth is made clearer by their abolition than if Christ, who has been openly manifested, were still figured by them as at a distance, and as under a veil. By the death of Christ, the veil of the temple was rent in twain, the living and express image of heavenly things, which had begun to be dimly shadowed forth, being now brought fully into view, as is described by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, (Heb. x. 1.) To the same effect, our Saviour declares, that "the law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it," (Luke xvi. 16;) not that the holy fathers were left without the preaching of the hope of salvation and eternal life, but because they only saw at a distance, and under a shadow, what we now behold in full light. Why it behoved the Church to ascend higher than these elements, is explained by John the Baptist, when he says, "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ," (John i. 17.) For though it is true that expiation was promised in the ancient sacrifices, and the ark of the covenant was a sure pledge of the paternal favour of God, the whole would have been elusory had it not been founded on the grace of Christ, wherein true and eternal stability is found. It must be held as a fixed point, that though legal rites ceased to be observed, their end serves to show more clearly how great their utility was before the advent of Christ, who, while he abolished the use, sealed their force and effect by his death.

17. There is a little more difficulty in the following passage of Paul: "You, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross," &c., (Col. ii. 13, 14.) He seems to extend the abolition of the Law considerably farther, as if we had nothing to do with its injunctions. Some err in interpreting this



simply of the Moral Law, as implying the abolition not of its injunctions, but of its inexorable rigour. Others examining Paul's words more carefully, see that they properly apply to the Ceremonial Law, and show that Paul repeatedly uses the term *ordinance* in this sense. He thus writes to the Ephesians: "He is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man," (Eph. ii. 14.) There can be no doubt that he is there treating of ceremonies, as he speaks of "the middle wall of partition" which separated Jews and Gentiles. I therefore hold that the former view is erroneous; but, at the same time, it does not appear to me that the latter comes fully up to the Apostle's meaning. For I cannot admit that the two passages are perfectly parallel. As his object was to assure the Ephesians that they were admitted to fellowship with the Jews, he tells them that the obstacle which formerly stood in the way was removed. This obstacle was in the ceremonies. For the rites of ablution and sacrifice, by which the Jews were consecrated to the Lord, separated them from the Gentiles. But who sees not that, in the Epistle to the Colossians, a sublimer mystery is adverted to? No doubt, a question is raised there as to the Mosaic observances, to which false apostles were endeavouring to bind the Christian people. But as in the Epistle to the Galatians he takes a higher view of this controversy, and in a manner traces it to its fountain, so he does in this passage also. For if the only thing considered in rites is the necessity of observing them, of what use was it to call it a handwriting which was contrary to us? Besides, how could the bringing in of it be set down as almost the whole sum of redemption? Wherefore, the very nature of the case clearly shows that reference is here made to something more internal. I cannot doubt that I have ascertained the genuine interpretation, provided I am permitted to assume what Augustine has somewhere most truly affirmed, nay, derived from the very words of the Apostle, viz., that in the Jewish ceremonies there was more a confession than an expiation of sins. For

what more was done in sacrifice by those who substituted purifications instead of themselves, than to confess that they were conscious of deserving death? What did these purifications testify but that they themselves were impure? By these means, therefore, the handwriting both of their guilt and impurity was ever and anon renewed. But the attestation of these things was not the removal of them. Wherefore, the Apostle says that Christ is "the mediator of the new testament,—by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament," (Heb. ix. 15.) Justly, therefore, does the Apostle describe these handwritings as against the worshippers, and contrary to them, since by means of them their impurity and condemnation were openly sealed. There is nothing contrary to this in the fact that they were partakers of the same grace with ourselves. This they obtained through Christ, and not through the ceremonies which the Apostle there contrasts with Christ, showing that by the continued use of them the glory of Christ was obscured. We perceive how ceremonies, considered in themselves, are elegantly and appositely termed handwritings, and contrary to the salvation of man, in as much as they were a kind of formal instruments which attested his liability. On the other hand, when false apostles wished to bind them on the Christian Church, Paul, entering more deeply into their signification, with good reason warned the Colossians how seriously they would relapse if they allowed a yoke to be in that way imposed upon them. By so doing, they, at the same time, deprived themselves of all benefit from Christ, who, by his eternal sacrifice once offered, had abolished those daily sacrifices, which were indeed powerful to attest sin, but could do nothing to destroy it.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## EXPOSITION OF THE MORAL LAW.

This chapter consists of four parts. I. Some general observations necessary for the understanding of the subject are made by way of preface, sec. 1-5. II. Three things always to be attended to in ascertaining and expounding the meaning of the Moral Law, sec. 6-12. III. Exposition of the Moral Law, or the Ten Commandments, sec. 13-~~17~~. IV. The end for which the whole Law is intended, viz., to teach not only elementary principles, but perfection, sec. 51, to the end of the chapter.

*Sections.*

1. The Law was committed to writing, in order that it might teach more fully and perfectly that knowledge, both of God and of ourselves, which the law of nature teaches meagrely and obscurely. Proof of this, from an enumeration of the principal parts of the Moral Law; and also from the dictate of natural law, written on the hearts of all, and, in a manner, effaced by sin.
2. Certain general maxims. 1. From the knowledge of God, furnished by the Law, we learn that God is our Father and Ruler. Righteousness is pleasing, iniquity is an abomination in his sight. Hence, how weak soever we may be, our duty is to cultivate the one, and shun the other.
3. From the knowledge of ourselves, furnished by the Law, we learn to discern our own utter powerlessness, we are ashamed; and seeing it is in vain to seek for righteousness in ourselves, are induced to seek it elsewhere.
4. Hence, God has annexed promises and threatenings to his promises. These not limited to the present life, but embrace things heavenly and eternal. They, moreover, attest the spotless purity of God, his love of righteousness, and also his kindness towards us.
5. The Law shows, moreover, that there is nothing more acceptable to God than obedience. Hence, all superstitious and hypocritical modes of worship are condemned. A remedy against superstitious worship and human presumption.
6. The second part of the chapter, containing three observations or rules. First rule, Our life must be formed by the Law, not only to external honesty, but to inward and spiritual righteousness.



In this respect, the Law of God differs from civil laws, he being a spiritual Lawgiver, man not. This rule of great extent, and not sufficiently attended to.

7. This first rule confirmed by the authority of Christ, and vindicated from the false dogma of Sophists, who say that Christ is only another Moses.
8. Second observation or rule to be carefully attended to, viz., that the end of the command must be inquired into, until it is ascertained what the Lawgiver approves or disapproves. Example. Where the Law approves, its opposite is condemned, and *vice versa*.
9. Full explanation of this latter point. Example.
10. The Law states what is most impious in each transgression, in order to show how heinous the transgression is. Example.
11. Third observation or rule regards the division of the Law into Two Tables: the former comprehending our duty to God; the latter, our duty to our neighbour. The connection between these necessary and inseparable. Their invariable order. Sum of the Law.
12. Division of the Law into Ten Commandments. Various distinctions made with regard to them, but the best distinction that which divides them into Two Tables. Four commandments belong to the First, and six to the Second Table.
13. The third part of the chapter, containing an exposition of the Decalogue. The preface vindicates the authority of the Law. This it does in three ways. First, by a declaration of its majesty.
14. The preface to the Law vindicates its authority. Secondly, by calling to mind God's paternal kindness.
15. Thirdly, by calling to mind the deliverance out of the land of Egypt. Why God distinguishes himself by certain epithets. Why mention is made of the deliverance from Egypt. In what way, and how far, the remembrance of this deliverance should still affect us.
16. Exposition of the First Commandment. Its end. What it is to have God, and to have strange gods. Adoration due to God, trust, invocation, thanksgiving, and also true religion, required by the Commandment. Superstition, Polytheism, and Atheism, forbidden. What meant by the words, "before me."
17. Exposition of the Second Commandment. The end and sum of it. Two parts. Short enumeration of forbidden shapes.
18. Why a threatening is added. Four titles applied to God, to make a deeper impression. He is called Mighty, Jealous, an Avenger, Merciful. Why said to be jealous. Reason drawn from analogy.
19. Exposition of the threatening which is added. First, as to visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children. A misinterpretation on this head refuted, and the genuine meaning of the threatening explained.

20. Whether this visiting of the sins of parents inconsistent with the divine justice. Apparently conflicting passages reconciled.
21. Exposition of the latter part, viz., the showing mercy to thousands. The use of this promise. Consideration of an exception of frequent occurrence. The extent of this blessing.
22. Exposition of the Third Commandment. The end and sum of it. Three parts. These considered. What it is to use the name of God in vain. Swearing. Distinction between this commandment and the Ninth.
23. An oath defined. It is a species of divine worship. This explained.
24. Many modes in which this commandment is violated. 1. By taking God to witness what we know is false. The insult thus offered.
25. Modes of violation continued. 2. Taking God to witness in trivial matters. Contempt thus shown. When and how an oath should be used. 3. Substituting the servants of God instead of himself when taking an oath.
26. The Anabaptists, who condemn all oaths, refuted. 1. By the authority of Christ, who cannot be opposed in anything to the Father. A passage perverted by the Anabaptists explained. The design of our Saviour in the passage. What meant by his there prohibiting oaths.
27. The lawfulness of oaths confirmed by Christ and the apostles. Some approve of public, but not of private oaths. The lawfulness of the latter proved both by reason and example. Instances from Scripture.
28. Exposition of the Fourth Commandment. Its end. Three purposes.
29. Explanation of the first purpose, viz., a shadowing forth of spiritual rest. This the primary object of the precept. God is therein set forth as our sanctifier; and hence we must abstain from work, that the work of God in us may not be hindered.
30. The number seven denoting perfection in Scripture, this commandment may, in that respect, denote the perpetuity of the Sabbath, and its completion at the last day.
31. Taking a simpler view of the commandment, the number is of no consequence, provided we maintain the doctrine of a perpetual rest from all our works, and, at the same time, avoid a superstitious observance of days. The ceremonial part of the commandment abolished by the advent of Christ.
32. The second and third purposes of the Commandment explained. These twofold and perpetual. This confirmed. Of religious assemblies.
33. Of the observance of the Lord's day, in answer to those who complain that the Christian people are thus trained to Judaism. Objection.
34. Ground of this institution. There is no kind of superstitious necessity. The sum of the Commandment.

35. The Fifth Commandment, (the first of the Second Table,) expounded. Its end and substance. How far honour due to parents. To whom the term *father* applies.
36. It makes no difference whether those to whom this honour is required are worthy or unworthy. The honour is claimed especially for parents. It consists of three parts. 1. Reverence.
37. Honour due to parents continued. 2. Obedience. 3. Gratitude. Why a promise added. In what sense it is to be taken. The present life a testimony of divine blessing. The reservation considered and explained.
38. Conversely a curse denounced on disobedient children. How far obedience due to parents, and those in the place of parents.
39. Sixth Commandment expounded. Its end and substance. God, as a spiritual Lawgiver, forbids the murder of the heart, and requires a sincere desire to preserve the life of our neighbour.
40. A twofold ground for this Commandment. 1. Man is the image of God. 2. He is our flesh.
41. Exposition of the Seventh Command. The end and substance of it. Remedy against fornication.
42. Continence an excellent gift, when under the control of God only. Altogether denied to some; granted only for a time to others. Argument in favour of celibacy refuted.
43. Each individual may refrain from marriage so long as he is fit to observe celibacy. True celibacy, and the proper use of it. Any man not gifted with continence wars with God and with nature, as constituted by him, in remaining unmarried. Chastity defined.
44. Precautions to be observed in married life. Everything repugnant to chastity here condemned.
45. Exposition of the Eighth Commandment. Its end and substance. Four kinds of theft. The bad acts condemned by this Commandment. Other peculiar kinds of theft.
46. Proper observance of this Commandment. Four heads. Application. 1. To the people and the magistrate. 2. To the pastors of the Church and their flocks. 3. To parents and children. 4. To the old and the young. 5. To servants and masters. 6. To individuals.
47. Exposition of the Ninth Commandment. Its end and substance. The essence of the Commandment—detestation of falsehood, and the pursuit of truth. Two kinds of falsehood. Public and private testimony. The equity of this Commandment.
48. How numerous the violations of this Commandment. 1. By detraction. 2. By evil speaking—a thing contrary to the offices of Christian charity. 3. By scurrility or irony. 4. By prying curiosity, and proneness to harsh judgments.
49. Exposition of the Tenth Commandment. Its end and substance. What meant by the term *Covetousness*. Distinction between counsel and the covetousness here condemned.



50. Why God requires so much purity. Objection. Answer. Charity toward our neighbour here principally commended. Why house, wife, man-servant, maid-servant, ox, and ass, &c., are mentioned. Improper division of this Commandment into two.
51. The last part of the chapter. The end of the Law. Proof. A summary of the Ten Commandments. The Law delivers not merely rudiments and first principles, but a perfect standard of righteousness, modelled on the divine purity.
52. Why, in the Gospels and Epistles, the latter table only mentioned, and not the first. The same thing occurs in the Prophets.
53. An objection to what is said in the former section removed.
54. A conduct duly regulated by the divine Law, characterised by charity toward our neighbour. This subverted by those who give the first place to self-love. Refutation of their opinion.
55. Who our neighbour. Double error of the Schoolmen on this point.
56. This error consists, I. In converting precepts into counsels to be observed by monks.
57. Refutation of this error from Scripture and the ancient Theologians. Sophistical objection obviated.
58. Error of the Schoolmen consists, II. In calling hidden impiety and covetousness venial sins. Refutation drawn, 1. From a consideration of the whole Decalogue. 2. The testimony of an Apostle. 3. The authority of Christ. 4. The nature and majesty of God. 5. The sentence pronounced against sin. Conclusion.

1. I BELIEVE it will not be out of place here to introduce the Ten Commandments of the Law, and give a brief exposition of them. In this way it will be made more clear, that the worship which God originally prescribed is still in force, (a point to which I have already adverted;) and then a second point will be confirmed, viz., that the Jews not only learned from the law wherein true piety consisted, but from feeling their inability to observe it were overawed by the fear of judgment, and so drawn, even against their will, towards the Mediator. In giving a summary of what constitutes the true knowledge of God,<sup>1</sup> we showed that we cannot form any just conception of the character of God, without feeling overawed by his majesty, and bound to do him service. In regard to the knowledge of ourselves, we showed that it principally consists in renouncing all idea of our own strength,

<sup>1</sup> This chapter is connected with Book I., chap. i. and ii., and with Book II., chap. i.-vi. See also Book II., chap. ii., sec. 22.

and divesting ourselves of all confidence in our own righteousness, while, on the other hand, under a full consciousness of our wants, we learn true humility and self-abasement. Both of these the Lord accomplishes by his Law, first, when, in assertion of the right which he has to our obedience, he calls us to reverence his majesty, and prescribes the conduct by which this reverence is manifested; and, secondly, when, by promulgating the rule of his justice, (a rule, to the rectitude of which our nature, from being depraved and perverted, is continually opposed, and to the perfection of which our ability, from its infirmity and nervelessness for good, is far from being able to attain,) he charges us both with impotence and unrighteousness. Moreover, the very things contained in the two tables are, in a manner, dictated to us by that internal law, which, as has been already said, is in a manner written and stamped on every heart. For conscience, instead of allowing us to stifle our perceptions, and sleep on without interruption, acts as an inward witness and monitor, reminds us of what we owe to God, points out the distinction between good and evil, and thereby convicts us of departure from duty. But man, being immured in the darkness of error, is scarcely able, by means of that natural law, to form any tolerable idea of the worship which is acceptable to God. At all events, he is very far from forming any correct knowledge of it. In addition to this, he is so swollen with arrogance and ambition, and so blinded with self-love, that he is unable to survey, and, as it were, descend into himself, that he may so learn to humble and abase himself, and confess his misery. Therefore, as a necessary remedy, both for our dulness and our contumacy, the Lord has given us his written Law, which, by its sure attestations, removes the obscurity of the law of nature, and also, by shaking off our lethargy, makes a more lively and permanent impression on our minds.

2. It is now easy to understand the doctrine of the law, viz., that God, as our Creator, is entitled to be regarded by us as a Father and Master, and should, accordingly, receive from us fear, love, reverence, and glory; nay, that we are

not our own, to follow whatever course passion dictates, but are bound to obey him implicitly, and to acquiesce entirely in his good pleasure. Again, the Law teaches, that justice and rectitude are a delight, injustice an abomination to him, and, therefore, as we would not with impious ingratitude revolt from our Maker, our whole life must be spent in the cultivation of righteousness. For if we manifest becoming reverence only when we prefer his will to our own, it follows, that the only legitimate service to him is the practice of justice, purity, and holiness. Nor can we plead as an excuse, that we want the power, and, like debtors, whose means are exhausted, are unable to pay. We cannot be permitted to measure the glory of God by our ability; whatever we may be, he ever remains like himself, the friend of righteousness, the enemy of unrighteousness, and whatever his demands from us may be, as he can only require what is right, we are necessarily under a natural obligation to obey. Our inability to do so is our own fault. If lust, in which sin has its dominion, so enthrals us, that we are not free to obey our Father, there is no ground for pleading necessity as a defence, since this evil necessity is within, and must be imputed to ourselves.

3. When, under the guidance of the Law, we have advanced thus far, we must, under the same guidance, proceed to descend into ourselves. In this way, we at length arrive at two results: First, contrasting our conduct with the righteousness of the Law, we see how very far it is from being in accordance with the will of God, and, therefore, how unworthy we are of holding our place among his creatures, far less of being accounted his sons; and, secondly, taking a survey of our powers, we see that they are not only unequal to fulfil the Law, but are altogether null. The necessary consequence must be, to produce distrust of our own ability, and also anxiety and trepidation of mind. Conscience cannot feel the burden of its guilt, without forthwith turning to the judgment of God, while the view of this judgment cannot fail to excite a dread of death. In like manner, the proofs of our utter powerlessness must instantly beget despair of our own strength. Both feelings are productive of humility and abasement, and



hence the sinner, terrified at the prospect of eternal death, (which he sees justly impending over him for his iniquities,) turns to the mercy of God as the only haven of safety. Feeling his utter inability to pay what he owes to the Law, and thus despairing of himself, he bethinks him of applying and looking to some other quarter for help.

4. But the Lord does not count it enough to inspire a reverence for his justice. To imbue our hearts with love to himself, and, at the same time, with hatred to iniquity, he has added promises and threatenings. The eye of our mind being too dim to be attracted by the mere beauty of goodness, our most merciful Father has been pleased, in his great indulgence, to allure us to love and long after it by the hope of reward. He accordingly declares that rewards for virtue are treasured up with him, that none who yield obedience to his commands will labour in vain. On the other hand, he proclaims not only that iniquity is hateful in his sight, but that it will not escape with impunity, because he will be the avenger of his insulted majesty. That he may encourage us in every way, he promises present blessings, as well as eternal felicity, to the obedience of those who shall have kept his commands, while he threatens transgressors with present suffering, as well as the punishment of eternal death. The promise, "Ye shall therefore keep my statutes, and my judgments; which if a man do, he shall live in them," (Lev. xviii. 5,) and corresponding to this the threatening, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die," (Ezek. xviii. 4, 20;) doubtless point to a future life and death, both without end. But though in every passage where the favour or anger of God is mentioned, the former comprehends eternity of life and the latter eternal destruction, the Law, at the same time, enumerates a long catalogue of present blessings and curses, (Lev. xxvi. 4; Deut. xxviii. 1.) The threatenings attest the spotless purity of God, which cannot bear iniquity, while the promises attest at once his infinite love of righteousness, (which he cannot leave unrewarded,) and his wondrous kindness. Being bound to do him homage with all that we have, he is perfectly entitled to demand everything which he requires of us as a debt; and as a debt, the payment is unwor-

thy of reward. He therefore foregoes his right, when he holds forth reward for services which are not offered spontaneously, as if they were not due. The amount of these services, in themselves, has been partly described, and will appear more clearly in its own place. For the present, it is enough to remember that the promises of the Law are no mean commendation of righteousness, as they show how much God is pleased with the observance of them, while the threatenings denounced are intended to produce a greater abhorrence of unrighteousness, lest the sinner should indulge in the blandishments of vice, and forget the judgment which the divine Lawgiver has prepared for him.

5. The Lord, in delivering a perfect rule of righteousness, has reduced it in all its parts to his mere will, and in this way has shown that there is nothing more acceptable to him than obedience. There is the more necessity for attending to this, because the human mind, in its wantonness, is ever and anon inventing different modes of worship as a means of gaining his favour. This irreligious affectation of religion being innate in the human mind, has betrayed itself in every age, and is still doing so, men always longing to devise some method of procuring righteousness without any sanction from the Word of God.<sup>1</sup> Hence, in those observances which are generally regarded as good works, the precepts of the Law occupy a narrow space, almost the whole being usurped by this endless host of human inventions. But was not this the very license which Moses meant to curb, when, after the promulgation of the Law, he thus addressed the people: "Observe and hear all these words which I command thee, that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee for ever, when thou doest that which is good and right in the sight of the Lord thy God." "What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it," (Deut. xii. 28-32.) Previously, after asking "what nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?" he had added, "Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget

<sup>1</sup> See Calvin, *De Vera Ecclesiæ Reformandæ Ratione*.

the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life," (Deut. iv. 8, 9.) God foreseeing that the Israelites would not rest, but after receiving the Law, would, unless sternly prohibited, give birth to new kinds of righteousness, declares that the Law comprehended a perfect righteousness. This ought to have been a most powerful restraint, and yet they desisted not from the presumptuous course so strongly prohibited. How do we act? We are certainly under the same obligation as they were; for there cannot be a doubt that the claim of absolute perfection which God made for his Law is perpetually in force. Not contented with it, however, we labour prodigiously in feigning and coining an endless variety of good works, one after another. The best cure for this vice would be a constant and deep-seated conviction that the Law was given from heaven to teach us a perfect righteousness; that the only righteousness so taught is that which the divine will expressly enjoins; and that it is, therefore, vain to attempt, by new forms of worship, to gain the favour of God, whose true worship consists in obedience alone; or rather, that to go a wandering after good works which are not prescribed by the Law of God, is an intolerable violation of true and divine righteousness. Most truly does Augustine say in one place, that the obedience which is rendered to God is the parent and guardian; in another, that it is the source of all the virtues.<sup>1</sup>

6. After we shall have expounded the Divine Law, what has been previously said of its office and use will be understood more easily, and with greater benefit. But before we proceed to the consideration of each separate commandment, it will be proper to take a general survey of the whole. At the outset, it was proved that in the Law human life is instructed not merely in outward decency, but in inward spiritual righteousness. Though none can deny this, yet very few duly attend to it, because they do not consider the Lawgiver, by whose character that of the Law must also

<sup>1</sup> See Augustin. De Civitate Dei, Lib. iv. c. 12, and Lib. xiii. c. 20, and Lib. xiv. c. 12. See also Lib. De Bono Conjugali, and Lib. Contra Adversarios Legis et Prophetarum, Lib. i. c. 14.



be determined. Should a king issue an edict prohibiting murder, adultery, and theft, the penalty, I admit, will not be incurred by the man who has only felt a longing in his mind after these vices, but has not actually committed them. The reason is, that a human lawgiver does not extend his care beyond outward order, and, therefore, his injunctions are not violated without outward acts. But God, whose eye nothing escapes, and who regards not the outward appearance so much as purity of heart, under the prohibition of murder, adultery, and theft, includes wrath, hatred, lust, covetousness, and all other things of a similar nature. Being a spiritual Lawgiver, he speaks to the soul not less than the body. The murder which the soul commits is wrath and hatred; the theft, covetousness and avarice; and the adultery, lust. It may be alleged that human laws have respect to intentions and wishes, and not fortuitous events. I admit this, but then these must manifest themselves externally. They consider the *animus* with which the act was done, but do not scrutinize the secret thoughts. Accordingly, their demand is satisfied when the hand merely refrains from transgression. On the contrary, the law of heaven being enacted for our minds, the first thing necessary to a due observance of the Law is to put them under restraint. But the generality of men, even while they are most anxious to conceal their disregard of the Law, only frame their hands and feet and other parts of their body to some kind of observance, but in the meanwhile keep the heart utterly estranged from everything like obedience. They think it enough to have carefully concealed from man what they are doing in the sight of God. Hearing the commandments, "Thou shalt not kill," "Thou shalt not commit adultery," "Thou shalt not steal," they do not unsheathe their sword for slaughter, nor defile their bodies with harlots, nor put forth their hands to other men's goods. So far well; but with their whole soul they breathe out slaughter, boil with lust, cast a greedy eye at their neighbour's property, and in wish devour it. Here the principal thing which the Law requires is wanting. Whence, then, this gross stupidity, but just because they lose sight of the Lawgiver, and

form an idea of righteousness in accordance with their own disposition? Against this Paul strenuously protests, when he declares that the "*law is spiritual*," (Rom. vii. 14;) intimating that it not only demands the homage of the soul, and mind, and will, but requires an angelic purity, which, purified from all filthiness of the flesh, savours only of the Spirit.

7. In saying that this is the meaning of the Law, we are not introducing a new interpretation of our own; we are following Christ, the best interpreter of the Law, (Matth. v. 22, 28, 44.) The Pharisees having instilled into the people the erroneous idea that the Law was fulfilled by every one who did not in external act do anything against the Law, he pronounces this a most dangerous delusion, and declares that an immodest look is adultery, and that hatred of a brother is murder. "Whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment;" whosoever by whispering or murmuring gives indication of being offended, "shall be in danger of the council;" whosoever by reproaches and evil-speaking gives way to open anger, "shall be in danger of hell-fire." Those who have not perceived this, have pretended that Christ was only a second Moses, the giver of an Evangelical, to supply the deficiency of the Mosaic Law. Hence the common axiom as to the perfection of the Evangelical Law, and its great superiority to that of Moses. This idea is in many ways most pernicious. For it will appear from Moses himself, when we come to give a summary of his precepts, that great indignity is thus done to the Divine Law. It certainly insinuates, that the holiness of the fathers under the Law was little else than hypocrisy, and leads us away from that one unvarying rule of righteousness. It is very easy, however, to confute this error, which proceeds on the supposition that Christ added to the Law, whereas he only restored it to its integrity by maintaining and purifying it when obscured by the falsehood, and defiled by the leaven of the Pharisees.

8. The next observation we would make is, that there is always more in the requirements and prohibitions of the Law than is expressed in words. This, however, must be understood so as not to convert it into a kind of Lesbian

code;<sup>1</sup> and thus, by licentiously wresting the Scriptures, make them assume any meaning that we please. By taking this excessive liberty with Scripture, its authority is lowered with some, and all hope of understanding it abandoned by others. We must, therefore, if possible, discover some path which may conduct us with direct and firm step to the will of God. We must consider, I say, how far interpretation can be permitted to go beyond the literal meaning of the words, still making it apparent that no appendix of human glosses is added to the Divine Law, but that the pure and genuine meaning of the Lawgiver is faithfully exhibited. It is true that, in almost all the commandments, there are elliptical expressions, and that, therefore, any man would make himself ridiculous by attempting to restrict the spirit of the Law to the strict letter of the words. It is plain that a sober interpretation of the Law must go beyond these, but how far is doubtful, unless some rule be adopted. The best rule, in my opinion, would be, to be guided by the principle of the commandment, viz., to consider in the case of each what the purpose is for which it was given. For example, every commandment either requires or prohibits; and the nature of each is instantly discerned when we look to the principle of the commandment as its end. Thus, the end of the Fifth Commandment is to render honour to those on whom God bestows it. The sum of the commandment, therefore, is, that it is right in itself, and pleasing to God, to honour those on whom he has conferred some distinction; that to despise and rebel against such persons is offensive to Him. The principle of the First Commandment is, that God only is to be worshipped. The sum of the commandment, therefore, is, that true piety, in other words, the worship of the Deity, is acceptable, and impiety is an abomination, to him. So in each of the commandments we must first look to the matter of which it treats, and then consider its end, until we discover what it properly is that the Lawgiver declares to be pleasing or displeasing to him. Only, we must reason from the precept to its contrary in this way: If this pleases God, its opposite displeases; if that displeases, its opposite

<sup>1</sup> "Ne sit nobis Lesbiæ regulæ," omitted in the French.



pleases : if God commands this, he forbids the opposite ; if he forbids that, he commands the opposite.

9. What is now touched on somewhat obscurely will become perfectly clear as we proceed and get accustomed to the exposition of the Commandments. It is sufficient thus to have adverted to the subject ; but perhaps our concluding statement will require to be briefly confirmed, as it might otherwise not be understood, or, though understood, might, perhaps, at the outset appear unsound. There is no need of proving, that when good is ordered, the evil which is opposed to it is forbidden. This every one admits. It will also be admitted, without much difficulty, that when evil is forbidden, its opposite is enjoined. Indeed, it is a common saying, that censure of vice is commendation of virtue. We, however, demand somewhat more than is commonly understood by these expressions. When the particular virtue opposed to a particular vice is spoken of, all that is usually meant is abstinence from that vice. We maintain that it goes farther, and means opposite duties and positive acts. Hence the commandment, "Thou shalt not kill," the generality of men will merely consider as an injunction to abstain from all injury, and all wish to inflict injury. I hold that it moreover means, that we are to aid our neighbour's life by every means in our power. And not to assert without giving my reason, I prove it thus : God forbids us to injure or hurt a brother, because he would have his life to be dear and precious to us ; and, therefore, when he so forbids, he, at the same time, demands all the offices of charity which can contribute to his preservation.

10. But why did God thus deliver his commandments, as it were, by halves, using elliptical expressions with a larger meaning than that actually expressed ? Other reasons are given, but the following seems to me the best :—As the flesh is always on the alert to extenuate the heinousness of sin, (unless it is made, as it were, perceptible to the touch,) and to cover it with specious pretexts, the Lord sets forth, by way of example, whatever is foulest and most iniquitous in each species of transgression, that the delivery of it might produce a shudder in the hearer, and impress his

mind with a deeper abhorrence of sin. In forming an estimate of sins, we are often imposed upon by imagining that the more hidden the less heinous they are. This delusion the Lord dispels by accustoming us to refer the whole multitude of sins to particular heads, which admirably show how great a degree of heinousness there is in each. For example, wrath and hatred do not seem so very bad when they are designated by their own names; but when they are prohibited under the name of murder, we understand better how abominable they are in the sight of God, who puts them in the same class with that horrid crime. Influenced by his judgment, we accustom ourselves to judge more accurately of the heinousness of offences which previously seemed trivial.

11. It will now be proper to consider what is meant by the division of the divine Law into Two Tables. It will be judged by all men of sense from the formal manner in which these are sometimes mentioned, that it has not been done at random, or without reason. Indeed, the reason is so obvious as not to allow us to remain in doubt with regard to it. God thus divided his Law into two parts, containing a complete rule of righteousness, that he might assign the first place to the duties of religion which relate especially to His worship, and the second to the duties of charity which have respect to man. The first foundation of righteousness undoubtedly is the worship of God. When it is subverted, all the other parts of righteousness, like a building rent asunder, and in ruins, are racked and scattered. What kind of righteousness do you call it, not to commit theft and rapine, if you, in the meantime, with impious sacrilege, rob God of his glory? or not to defile your body with fornication, if you profane his holy name with blasphemy? or not to take away the life of man, if you strive to cut off and destroy the remembrance of God? It is vain, therefore, to talk of righteousness apart from religion. Such righteousness has no more beauty than the trunk of a body deprived of its head.<sup>1</sup> Nor is

<sup>1</sup> The French is, "Tout ainsi comme si quelcun vouloit faire une belle monstre d'un corps sans teste;" just as if one were to try to make a beautiful monster of a body without a head.

religion the principal part merely : it is the very soul by which the whole lives and breathes. Without the fear of God, men do not even observe justice and charity among themselves. We say, then, that the worship of God is the beginning and foundation of righteousness ; and that wherever it is wanting, any degree of equity, or continence, or temperance, existing among men themselves, is empty and frivolous in the sight of God. We call it the source and soul of righteousness, in as much as men learn to live together temperately, and without injury, when they revere God as the judge of right and wrong. In the First Table, accordingly, he teaches us how to cultivate piety, and the proper duties of religion in which his worship consists ; in the second, he shows how, in the fear of his name, we are to conduct ourselves towards our fellow-men. Hence, as related by the Evangelists, (Matth. xxii. 37 ; Luke x. 27,) our Saviour summed up the whole Law in two heads, viz., to love the Lord with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all our strength, and our neighbour as ourselves. You see how, of the two parts under which he comprehends the whole Law, he devotes the one to God, and assigns the other to mankind.

12. But although the whole Law is contained in two heads, yet, in order to remove every pretext for excuse, the Lord has been pleased to deliver more fully and explicitly in Ten Commandments, every thing relating to his own honour, fear, and love, as well as every thing relating to the charity which, for his sake, he enjoins us to have towards our fellow-men. Nor is it an unprofitable study to consider the division of the commandments, provided we remember that it is one of those matters in which every man should have full freedom of judgment, and on account of which, difference of opinion should not lead to contention. We are, indeed, under the necessity of making this observation, lest the division which we are to adopt should excite the surprise or derision of the reader, as novel or of recent invention.

There is no room for controversy as to the fact, that the Law is divided into ten heads, since this is repeatedly sanctioned by divine authority. The question, therefore, is



not as to the number of the parts, but the method of dividing them. Those who adopt a division which gives three commandments to the First Table, and throws the remaining seven into the Second Table, expunge the commandment concerning images from the list, or at least conceal it under the first, though there cannot be a doubt that it was distinctly set down by the Lord as a separate commandment; whereas the tenth, which prohibits the coveting of what belongs to our neighbour, they absurdly break down into two. Moreover, it will soon appear, that this method of dividing was unknown in a purer age. Others count four commandments in the First Table as we do, but for the first set down the introductory promise, without adding the precept. But because I must hold, unless I am convinced by clear evidence to the contrary, that the "ten words" mentioned by Moses are Ten Commandments, and because I see that number arranged in most admirable order, I must, while I leave them to hold their own opinion, follow what appears to me better established, viz., that what they make to be the first commandment is of the nature of a preface to the whole Law, that thereafter follow four commandments in the First Table, and six in the Second, in the order in which they will here be reviewed. This division Origen adopts without discussion, as if it had been every where received in his day.<sup>1</sup> It is also adopted by Augustine, in his book addressed to Boniface, where, in enumerating the commandments, he follows this order, Let one God be religiously obeyed, let no idol be worshipped, let the name of God be not used in vain; while previously he had made separate mention of the typical commandment of the Sabbath. Elsewhere, indeed, he expresses approbation of the first division, but on too slight grounds, because, by the number three, (making the First Table consist of three commandments,) the mystery of the Trinity would be better manifested. Even here, however, he does not dis-

<sup>1</sup> Origen in Exod. cap. xx. Homil. 8; Augustin. contra duas Epist. Pelagii, Lib. iii. cap. 4; Quæst. in Vet. Test. Lib. ii. cap. 74; Epist. cxix. ad Januarium, cap. 11. The opinion of Josephus, and the last mentioned opinion of Augustine, are briefly refuted by Calvin, in Exod. cap. xx., in expounding the Fifth Commandment.

guise his opinion, that in other respects, our division is more to his mind. Besides these, we are supported by the author of an unfinished work on Matthew.<sup>1</sup> Josephus, no doubt with the general consent of his age, assigns five commandments to each table. This, while repugnant to reason, inasmuch as it confounds the distinction between piety and charity, is also refuted by the authority of our Saviour, who in Matthew places the command to honour parents in the list of those belonging to the Second Table, (Matth. xix. 19.) Let us now hear God speaking in his own words.

### First Commandment.

I AM THE LORD THY GOD, WHICH BROUGHT THEE OUT OF THE LAND OF EGYPT, OUT OF THE HOUSE OF BONDAGE. THOU SHALT HAVE NO OTHER GODS BEFORE ME.

13. Whether you take the former sentence as a part of the commandment, or read it separately, is to me a matter of indifference, provided you grant that it is a kind of preface to the whole Law. In enacting laws, the first thing to be guarded against is their being forthwith abrogated by contempt. The Lord, therefore, takes care, in the first place, that this shall not happen to the Law about to be delivered, by introducing it with a triple sanction. He claims to himself power and authority to command, that he may impress the chosen people with the necessity of obedience; he holds forth a promise of favour, as a means of alluring them to the study of holiness; and he reminds them of his kindness, that he may convict them of ingratitude, if they fail to make a suitable return. By the name, Lord, are denoted power and lawful dominion. If all things are from him, and by him consist, they ought in justice to bear reference to him, as Paul says, (Rom. xi. 36.) This name, therefore, is in itself

<sup>1</sup> The French is, "Nous avons aussi un autre ancien Pere qui accorde a nostre opinion, celui qui a ecrit les Commentaires imparfaits sur Saint Matthieu." We have also another ancient Father who agrees with us in our opinion, he who wrote the unfinished Commentaries on St Matthew.

sufficient to bring us under the authority of the divine majesty : for it were monstrous for us to wish to withdraw from the dominion of him, out of whom we cannot even exist.

14. After showing that he has a right to command, and to be obeyed, he next, in order not to seem to drag men by mere necessity, but to allure them, graciously declares, that he is the God of the Church. For the mode of expression implies, that there is a mutual relation included in the promise, "I will be their God, and they shall be my people," (Jer. xxxi. 33.) Hence Christ infers the immortality of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, from the fact that God had declared himself to be their God, (Matth. xxii. 52.) It is, therefore, the same as if he had said, I have chosen you to myself, as a people to whom I shall not only do good in the present life, but also bestow felicity in the life to come. The end contemplated in this is adverted to in the Law, in various passages. For when the Lord condescends in mercy to honour us so far as to admit us to partnership with his chosen people, he chooses us, as Moses says, "to be a holy people," "a peculiar people unto himself," to "keep all his commandments," (Deut. vii. 6; xiv. 2; xxvi. 18.) Hence the exhortation, "Ye shall be holy; for I the Lord your God am holy," (Lev. xix. 2.) These two considerations form the ground of the remonstrance, "A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master; if then I be a father, where is mine honour? and if I be a master, where is my fear? saith the Lord of hosts," (Mal. i. 6.)

15. Next follows a commemoration of his kindness, which ought to produce upon us an impression strong in proportion to the detestation in which ingratitude is held even among men. It is true, indeed, he was reminding Israel of a deliverance then recent, but one which, on account of its wondrous magnitude, was to be for ever memorable to the remotest posterity. Moreover, it is most appropriate to the matter in hand.<sup>1</sup> For the Lord intimates that they were delivered from miserable bondage, that they might learn to

<sup>1</sup> "Præsentî causæ."—The French is, "du temps que la loi devoit estre publiée;" to the time when the Law was to be published.



yield prompt submission and obedience to him as the author of their freedom. In like manner, to keep us to his true worship, he often describes himself by certain epithets which distinguish his sacred Deity from all idols and fictitious gods. For, as I formerly observed, such is our proneness to vanity and presumption, that as soon as God is named, our minds, unable to guard against error, immediately fly off to some empty delusion. In applying a remedy to this disease, God distinguishes his divinity by certain titles, and thus confines us, as it were, within distinct boundaries, that we may not wander hither and thither, and feign some new deity for ourselves, abandoning the living God, and setting up an idol. For this reason, whenever the Prophets would bring him properly before us, they invest, and, as it were, surround him with those characters under which he had manifested himself to the people of Israel. When he is called the God of Abraham, or the God of Israel, when he is stationed in the temple of Jerusalem, between the Cherubim, these, and similar modes of expression,<sup>1</sup> do not confine him to one place or one people, but are used merely for the purpose of fixing our thoughts on that God who so manifested himself in the covenant which he made with Israel, as to make it unlawful on any account to deviate from the strict view there given of his character. Let it be understood, then, that mention is made of deliverance, in order to make the Jews submit with greater readiness to that God who justly claims them as his own. We again, instead of supposing that the matter has no reference to us, should reflect that the bondage of Israel in Egypt was a type of that spiritual bondage, in the fetters of which we are all bound, until the heavenly avenger delivers us by the power of his own arm, and transports us into his free kingdom. Therefore, as in old times, when he would gather together the scattered Israelites to the worship of his name, he rescued them from the intolerable tyranny of Pharaoh, so all who profess him now are delivered from the fatal tyranny of the devil, of which that of Egypt was only a

<sup>1</sup> Exod. iii. 6; Amos i. 2; Hab. ii. 20; Psalm lxxx. 2; xcix. 1; Isaiah xxxvii. 16.

type. There is no man, therefore, whose mind ought not to be aroused to give heed to the Law, which, as he is told, proceeded from the supreme King, from him who, as he gave all their being, justly destines and directs them to himself as their proper end. There is no man, I say, who should not hasten to embrace the Lawgiver, whose commands, he knows, he has been specially appointed to obey, from whose kindness he anticipates an abundance of all good, and even a blessed immortality, and to whose wondrous power and mercy he is indebted for deliverance from the jaws of death.<sup>1</sup>

16. The authority of the Law being founded and established, God delivers his First Commandment—

THOU SHALT HAVE NO OTHER GODS BEFORE ME.

The purport of this commandment is, that the Lord will have himself alone to be exalted in his people, and claims the entire possession of them as his own. That it may be so, he orders us to abstain from ungodliness and superstition of every kind, by which the glory of his divinity is diminished or obscured; and, for the same reason, he requires us to worship and adore him with truly pious zeal. The simple terms used obviously amount to this. For seeing we cannot have God without embracing everything which belongs to him, the prohibition against having strange gods means, that nothing which belongs to him is to be transferred to any other. The duties which we owe to God are innumerable, but they seem to admit of being not improperly reduced to four heads: Adoration, with its accessory spiritual submission of conscience, Trust, Invocation, Thanksgiving.<sup>2</sup> By Adoration, I mean the veneration and worship which we render to him when we do homage to his majesty; and hence I make part of it to consist in bringing our consciences

<sup>1</sup> "E faucibus mortis."—French, "du gouffre d'enfer;" from the gulf of hell.

<sup>2</sup> Calvin. in Catechismo; De Necessitate Reformandæ Ecclesiæ; Vera Reformandæ Ecclesiæ Ratio.

into subjection to his Law.<sup>1</sup> Trust, is secure resting in him under a recognition of his perfections, when, ascribing to him all power, wisdom, justice, goodness, and truth, we consider ourselves happy in having been brought into intercourse with him. Invocation, may be defined the betaking of ourselves to his promised aid as the only resource in every case of need. Thanksgiving, is the gratitude which ascribes to him the praise of all our blessings. As the Lord does not allow these to be derived from any other quarter, so he demands that they shall be referred entirely to himself. It is not enough to refrain from other gods. We must, at the same time, devote ourselves wholly to him, not acting like certain impious despisers, who regard it as the shortest method, to hold all religious observance in derision. But here precedence must be given to true religion, which will direct our minds to the living God. When duly imbued with the knowledge of him, the whole aim of our lives will be to revere, fear, and worship his majesty, to enjoy a share in his blessings, to have recourse to him in every difficulty, to acknowledge, laud, and celebrate the magnificence of his works, to make him, as it were, the sole aim of all our actions. Next, we must beware of superstition, by which our minds are turned aside from the true God, and carried to and fro after a multiplicity of gods. Therefore, if we are contented with one God, let us call to mind what was formerly observed, that all fictitious gods are to be driven far away, and that the worship which he claims for himself is not to be mutilated. Not a particle of his glory is to be withheld: everything belonging to him must be reserved to him entire. The words, "before me," go to increase the indignity, God being provoked to jealousy whenever we substitute our fictions in his stead; just as an unfaithful wife stings her husband's heart more deeply when her adultery is committed openly before his eyes. Therefore, God having by his present power and grace declared that he had

<sup>1</sup> The French adds, "Car c'est un hommage spirituel qui se rend a lui comme souverain Roy, et ayant toute superiorité sur nos ames." For this is a spiritual homage which is rendered to him as sovereign King, having full supremacy over our souls.



respect to the people whom he had chosen, now, in order to deter them from the wickedness of revolt, warns them that they cannot adopt strange gods without his being witness and spectator of the sacrilege. To the audacity of so doing is added the very great impiety of supposing that they can mock the eye of God with their evasions. Far from this, the Lord proclaims that everything which we design, plan, or execute, lies open to his sight. Our conscience must, therefore, keep aloof from the most distant thought of revolt, if we would have our worship approved by the Lord. The glory of his Godhead must be maintained entire and incorrupt, not merely by external profession, but as under his eye, which penetrates the inmost recesses of his heart.

## Second Commandment.

THOU SHALT NOT MAKE UNTO THEE ANY GRAVEN IMAGE, OR ANY LIKENESS OF ANYTHING THAT IS IN HEAVEN ABOVE, OR THAT IS IN THE EARTH BENEATH, OR THAT IS IN THE WATER UNDER THE EARTH: THOU SHALT NOT BOW DOWN THYSELF TO THEM, NOR SERVE THEM.

17. As in the first commandment the Lord declares that he is one, and that besides him no gods must be either worshipped or imagined, so he here more plainly declares what his nature is, and what the kind of worship with which he is to be honoured, in order that we may not presume to form any carnal idea of him. The purport of the commandment, therefore, is, that he will not have his legitimate worship profaned by superstitious rites. Wherefore, in general, he calls us entirely away from the carnal frivolous observances which our stupid minds are wont to devise after forming some gross idea of the divine nature, while, at the same time, he instructs us in the worship which is legitimate, namely, spiritual worship of his own appointment. The grossest vice here prohibited is external idolatry. This commandment consists of two parts. The former curbs the licentious daring which would subject the

incomprehensible God to our senses, or represent him under any visible shape. The latter forbids the worship of images, on any religious ground. There is, moreover, a brief enumeration of all the forms by which the Deity was usually represented by heathen and superstitious nations. By "any thing which is in heaven above," is meant the sun, the moon, and the stars, perhaps also birds, as in Deuteronomy, where the meaning is explained, there is mention of birds as well as stars, (Deut. iv. 15.) I would not have made this observation, had I not seen that some absurdly apply it to the angels. The other particulars I pass, as requiring no explanation. We have already shown clearly enough (Book I. chap. xi. xii.) that every visible shape of Deity which man devises is diametrically opposed to the divine nature; and, therefore, that the moment idols appear, true religion is corrupted and adulterated.

18. The threatening subjoined ought to have no little effect in shaking off our lethargy. It is in the following terms :—

I THE LORD THY GOD AM A JEALOUS<sup>1</sup> GOD, VISITING THE INIQUITY OF THE FATHERS UPON THE CHILDREN UNTO THE THIRD AND FOURTH GENERATION OF THEM THAT HATE ME; AND SHOWING MERCY UNTO THOUSANDS OF THEM THAT LOVE ME, AND KEEP MY COMMANDMENTS.

The meaning here is the same as if he had said, that our duty is to cleave to him alone. To induce us to this, he proclaims his authority, which he will not permit to be impaired or despised with impunity. It is true, the word used is *El*, which means God; but as it is derived from a word meaning *strength*, I have had no hesitation, in order to express the sense more fully, so to render it as inserted on the margin. Secondly, he calls himself *jealous*, because he cannot bear a partner. Thirdly, he declares that he will vindicate his majesty and glory, if any transfer it either to the creatures or to graven images; and that not by a simple

<sup>1</sup> Or "Strong," this name being derived from a word denoting strength.

punishment of brief duration, but one extending to the third and fourth generation of such as imitate the impiety of their progenitors. In like manner, he declares his constant mercy and kindness to the remote posterity of those who love him, and keep his Law. The Lord very frequently addresses us in the character of a husband ;<sup>1</sup> the union by which he connects us with himself, when he receives us into the bosom of the Church, having some resemblance to that of holy wedlock, because founded on mutual faith. As he performs all the offices of a true and faithful husband, so he stipulates for love and conjugal chastity from us ; that is, that we do not prostitute our souls to Satan, to be defiled with foul carnal lusts. Hence, when he rebukes the Jews for their apostacy, he complains that they have cast off chastity, and polluted themselves with adultery. Therefore, as the purer and chaster the husband is, the more grievously is he offended when he sees his wife inclining to a rival ; so the Lord, who hath betrothed us to himself in truth, declares that he burns with the hottest jealousy whenever, neglecting the purity of his holy marriage, we defile ourselves with abominable lusts, and especially when the worship of his Deity, which ought to have been most carefully kept unimpaired, is transferred to another, or adulterated with some superstition ; since, in this way, we not only violate our plighted troth, but defile the nuptial couch, by giving access to adulterers.

19. In the threatening, we must attend to what is meant when God declares that he will visit the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation. It seems inconsistent with the equity of the divine procedure to punish the innocent for another's fault ; and the Lord himself declares, that " the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father," (Ezek. xviii. 20.) But still we meet more than once with a declaration as to the postponing of the punishment of the sins of fathers to future generations. Thus Moses repeatedly addresses the Lord as " visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation," (Num. xiv. 18.) In like manner,

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. xi. 2 ; Eph. v. 30 ; Jer. lxii. 5 ; Hos. ii. 9 ; Jer. iii. 1, 2 ; Hos. ii. 2.



Jeremiah, "Thou showest loving-kindness unto thousands, and recompensest the iniquity of the fathers into the bosom of their children after them," (Jer. xxxii. 18.) Some feeling sadly perplexed how to solve this difficulty, think it is to be understood of temporal punishments only, which it is said sons may properly bear for the sins of their parents, because they are often inflicted for their own safety. This is indeed true; for Isaiah declared to Hezekiah, that his children should be stript of the kingdom, and carried away into captivity, for a sin which he had committed, (Isa. xxxix. 7;) and the households of Pharaoh and Abimelech were made to suffer for an injury done to Abraham, (Gen. xii. 17; xx. 3-18.) But the attempt to solve the question in this way is an evasion rather than a true interpretation. For the punishment denounced here and in similar passages is too great to be confined within the limits of the present life. We must therefore understand it to mean, that a curse from the Lord righteously falls not only on the head of the guilty individual, but also on all his lineage. When it has fallen, what can be anticipated but that the father, being deprived of the Spirit of God, will live most flagitiously; that the son, being in like manner forsaken of the Lord, because of his father's iniquity, will follow the same road to destruction; and be followed in his turn by succeeding generations, forming a seed of evil-doers?

20. First, let us examine whether such punishment is inconsistent with the divine justice. If human nature is universally condemned, those on whom the Lord does not bestow the communication of his grace must be doomed to destruction; nevertheless, they perish by their own iniquity, not by unjust hatred on the part of God. There is no room to expostulate, and ask why the grace of God does not forward their salvation as it does that of others. Therefore, when God punishes the wicked and flagitious for their crimes, by depriving their families of his grace for many generations, who will dare to bring a charge against him for this most righteous vengeance? But it will be said, the Lord, on the contrary, declares, that the son shall not suffer for the father's sin, (Ezek. xviii. 20.) Observe the scope of that passage.

The Israelites, after being subjected to a long period of uninterrupted calamities, had begun to say, as a proverb, that their fathers had eaten the sour grape, and thus set the children's teeth on edge; meaning that they, though in themselves righteous and innocent, were paying the penalty of sins committed by their parents, and this more from the implacable anger than the duly tempered severity of God. The prophet declares it was not so: that they were punished for their own wickedness; that it was not in accordance with the justice of God that a righteous son should suffer for the iniquity of a wicked father; and that nothing of the kind was exemplified in what they suffered. For, if the visitation of which we now speak is accomplished when God withdraws from the children of the wicked the light of his truth and the other helps to salvation, the only way in which they are accursed for their fathers' wickedness is in being blinded and abandoned by God, and so left to walk in their parents' steps. The misery which they suffer in time, and the destruction to which they are finally doomed, are thus punishments inflicted by divine justice, not for the sins of others, but for their own iniquity.

21. On the other hand, there is a promise of mercy to thousands—a promise which is frequently mentioned in Scripture, and forms an article in the solemn covenant made with the Church—I will be “a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee,” (Gen. xvii. 7.) With reference to this, Solomon says, “The just man walketh in his integrity: his children are blessed after him,” (Prov. xx. 7;) not only in consequence of a religious education, (though this certainly is by no means unimportant,) but in consequence of the blessing promised in the covenant, viz., that the divine favour will dwell for ever in the families of the righteous. Herein is excellent consolation to believers, and great ground of terror to the wicked; for if, after death, the mere remembrance of righteousness and iniquity have such an influence on the divine procedure, that his blessing rests on the posterity of the righteous, and his curse on the posterity of the wicked, much more must it rest on the heads of the individuals themselves. Notwithstanding of this, however, the offspring of the wicked sometimes amends,

while that of believers degenerates ; because the Almighty has not here laid down an inflexible rule which might derogate from his free election. For the consolation of the righteous, and the dismay of the sinner, it is enough that the threatening itself is not vain or nugatory, although it does not always take effect. For, as the temporal punishments inflicted on a few of the wicked are proofs of the divine wrath against sin, and of the future judgment that will ultimately overtake all sinners, though many escape with impunity even to the end of their lives, so, when the Lord gives one example of blessing a son for his father's sake, by visiting him in mercy and kindness, it is a proof of constant and unfailing favour to his worshippers. On the other hand, when, in any single instance, he visits the iniquity of the father on the son, he gives intimation of the judgment which awaits all the reprobate for their own iniquities. The certainty of this is the principal thing here taught. Moreover, the Lord, as it were by the way, commends the riches of his mercy by extending it to thousands, while he limits his vengeance to four generations.

### Third Commandment.

THOU SHALT NOT TAKE THE NAME OF THE LORD THY  
GOD IN VAIN.

22. The purport of this Commandment is, that the majesty of the name of God is to be held sacred. In sum, therefore, it means, that we must not profane it by using it irreverently or contemptuously. This prohibition implies a corresponding precept, viz., that it be our study and care to treat his name with religious veneration. Wherefore it becomes us to regulate our minds and our tongues, so as never to think or speak of God and his mysteries without reverence and great soberness, and never, in estimating his works, to have any feeling towards him but one of deep veneration. We must, I say, steadily observe the three following things :—*First*, Whatever our mind conceives of him, whatever our tongue utters, must bespeak his



excellence, and correspond to the sublimity of his sacred name ; in short, must be fitted to extol its greatness. *Secondly*, We must not rashly and preposterously pervert his sacred word and adorable mysteries to purposes of ambition, or avarice, or amusement, but, according as they bear the impress of his dignity, must always maintain them in due honour and esteem. *Lastly*, We must not detract from or throw obloquy upon his works, as miserable men are wont insultingly to do, but must laud every action which we attribute to him as wise, and just, and good. This is to sanctify the name of God. When we act otherwise, his name is profaned with vain and wicked abuse, because it is applied to a purpose foreign to that to which it is consecrated. Were there nothing worse, in being deprived of its dignity it is gradually brought into contempt. But if there is so much evil in the rash and unseasonable employment of the divine name, there is still more evil in its being employed for nefarious purposes, as is done by those who use it in necromancy, cursing, illicit exorcisms, and other impious incantations. But the Commandment refers especially to the case of oaths, in which a perverse employment of the divine name is particularly detestable ; and this it does the more effectually to deter us from every species of profanation. That the thing here commanded relates to the worship of God, and the reverence due to his name, and not to the equity which men are to cultivate towards each other, is apparent from this, that afterwards, in the Second Table, there is a condemnation of the perjury and false testimony by which human society is injured, and that the repetition would be superfluous, if, in this Commandment, the duty of charity were handled. Moreover, this is necessary even for distinction, because, as was observed, God has, for good reason, divided his Law into two tables. The inference then is, that God here vindicates his own right, and defends his sacred name, but does not teach the duties which men owe to men.

23. In the first place, we must consider what an oath is. An oath, then, is calling God to witness that what we say is true. Execrations being manifestly insulting to God, are unworthy of being classed among oaths. That an oath,

when duly taken, is a species of divine worship, appears from many passages of Scripture, as when Isaiah prophesies of the admission of the Assyrians and Egyptians to a participation in the covenant, he says, "In that day shall five cities in the land of Egypt speak the language of Canaan, and swear to the Lord of hosts," (Isaiah xix. 18.) Swearing by the name of the Lord here means, that they will make a profession of religion. In like manner, speaking of the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom, it is said, "He who blesseth himself in the earth shall bless himself in the God of truth : and he that sweareth in the earth shall swear by the God of truth," (Isaiah lxxv. 16.) In Jeremiah it is said, "If they will diligently learn the ways of my people, to swear by my name, The Lord liveth; as they taught my people to swear by Baal; then shall they be built in the midst of my people," (Jer. xii. 16.) By appealing to the name of the Lord, and calling him to witness, we are justly said to declare our own religious veneration of him. For we thus acknowledge that he is eternal and unchangeable truth, inasmuch as we not only call upon him, in preference to others, as a fit witness to the truth, but as its only assertor, able to bring hidden things to light, a discernor of the hearts. When human testimony fails, we appeal to God as witness, especially when the matter to be proved lies hid in the conscience. For which reason, the Lord is grievously offended with those who swear by strange gods, and construes such swearing as a proof of open revolt, "Thy children have forsaken me, and sworn by them that are no gods," (Jer. v. 7.) The heinousness of the offence is declared by the punishment denounced against it, "I will cut off them that swear by the Lord, and that swear by Malcham," (Zeph. i. 4, 5.)

24. Understanding that the Lord would have our oaths to be a species of divine worship, we must be the more careful that they do not, instead of worship, contain insult, or contempt, and vilification. It is no slight insult to swear by him and do it falsely : hence in the Law this is termed profanation, (Lev. xix. 12.) For if God is robbed of his truth, what is it that remains? Without truth he could not be God. But assuredly he is robbed of his truth, when he is made the

approver and attester of what is false. Hence, when Joshua is endeavouring to make Achan confess the truth, he says, "My son, give, I pray thee, glory to the Lord God of Israel," (Joshua vii. 19;) intimating, that grievous dishonour is done to God when men swear by him falsely. And no wonder; for, as far as in them lies, his sacred name is in a manner branded with falsehood. That this mode of expression was common among the Jews whenever any one was called upon to take an oath, is evident from a similar obtestation used by the Pharisees, as given in John, (John ix. 24.) Scripture reminds us of the caution which we ought to use by employing such expressions as the following:—"As the Lord liveth;" "God do so and more also;" "I call God for a record upon my soul."<sup>1</sup> Such expressions intimate, that we cannot call God to witness our statement, without imprecating his vengeance for perjury if it is false.

25. The name of God is vulgarised and vilified when used in oaths, which, though true, are superfluous. This, too, is to take his name in vain. Wherefore, it is not sufficient to abstain from perjury, unless we, at the same time, remember that an oath is not appointed or allowed for passion or pleasure, but for necessity; and that, therefore, a licentious use is made of it by him who uses it on any other than necessary occasions. Moreover, no case of necessity can be pretended, unless where some purpose of religion or charity is to be served. In this matter, great sin is committed in the present day—sin the more intolerable in this, that its frequency has made it cease to be regarded as a fault, though it certainly is not accounted trivial before the judgment-seat of God. The name of God is everywhere profaned by introducing it indiscriminately in frivolous discourse; and the evil is disregarded, because it has been long and audaciously persisted in with impunity. The commandment of the Lord, however, stands; the penalty also stands, and will one day receive effect. Special vengeance will be executed on those who have taken the name of God in vain. Another form of violation is exhibited, when, with manifest impiety, we, in our oaths,

<sup>1</sup> 1 Sam. xiv. 44; 2 Kings vi. 31; 2 Cor. i. 23.



substitute the holy servants of God for God himself,<sup>1</sup> thus conferring upon them the glory of his Godhead. It is not without cause the Lord has, by a special commandment, required us to swear by his name, and, by a special prohibition, forbidden us to swear by other gods.<sup>2</sup> The Apostle gives a clear attestation to the same effect, when he says, that "men verily swear by the greater;" but that, "when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself," (Heb. vi. 16, 13.)

26. The Anabaptists, not content with this moderate use of oaths, condemn all, without exception, on the ground of our Saviour's general prohibition, "I say unto you, Swear not at all:" "Let your speech be Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil," (Matth. v. 34; James v. 12.) In this way, they inconsiderately make a stumbling-stone of Christ, setting him in opposition to the Father, as if he had descended into the world to annul his decrees. In the Law, the Almighty not only permits an oath as a thing that is lawful, (this were amply sufficient,) but, in a case of necessity, actually commands it, (Exod. xxii. 11.) Christ again declares, that he and his Father are one; that he only delivers what was commanded of his Father; that his doctrine is not his own, but his that sent him, (John x. 18, 30; vii. 16.) What then? Will they make God contradict himself, by approving and commanding at one time, what he afterwards prohibits and condemns? But as there is some difficulty in what our Saviour says on the subject of swearing, it may be proper to consider it a little. Here, however, we shall never arrive at the true meaning, unless we attend to the design of Christ, and the subject of which he is treating. His purpose was, neither to relax nor to curtail the Law, but to restore the true and genuine meaning, which had been greatly corrupted by the false glosses of the Scribes and Pharisees. If we attend to this, we shall not suppose that Christ condemned all oaths, but those only which transgressed the rule of the Law. It

<sup>1</sup> The French adds, "jurans par S. Jaques ou S. Antoine;"—swearing by St James or St Anthony.

<sup>2</sup> Exod. xxiii. 13; Deut. vi. 13; x. 20; Heb. vi. 13.

is evident, from the oaths themselves, that the people were accustomed to think it enough if they avoided perjury, whereas the Law prohibits not perjury merely, but also vain and superfluous oaths. Therefore our Lord, who is the best interpreter of the Law, reminds them that there is a sin not only in perjury, but in swearing. How in swearing? Namely, by swearing vainly. Those oaths, however, which are authorised by the Law, he leaves safe and free. Those who condemn oaths think their argument invincible when they fasten on the expression, *not at all*. The expression applies not to the word *swear*, but to the subjoined forms of oaths. For part of the error consisted in their supposing, that when they swore by the heaven and the earth, they did not touch the name of God. The Lord, therefore, after cutting off the principal source of prevarication, deprives them of all subterfuges, warning them against supposing that they escape guilt by suppressing the name of God, and appealing to heaven and earth. For it ought here to be observed in passing, that although the name of God is not expressed, yet men swear by him in using indirect forms, as when they swear by the light of life, by the bread they eat, by their baptism, or any other pledges of the divine liberality towards them. Some erroneously suppose that our Saviour, in that passage, rebukes superstition, by forbidding men to swear by heaven and earth, and Jerusalem. He rather refutes the sophistical subtilty of those who thought it nothing vainly to utter indirect oaths, imagining that they thus spared the holy name of God, whereas that name is inscribed on each of his mercies. The case is different, when any mortal living or dead, or an angel, is substituted in the place of God, as in the vile form devised by flattery in heathen nations, *By the life or genius of the king*; for, in this case, the false apotheosis obscures and impairs the glory of the one God. But when nothing else is intended than to confirm what is said by an appeal to the holy name of God, although it is done indirectly, yet his majesty is insulted by all frivolous oaths. Christ strips this abuse of every vain pretext when he says, Swear not at all. To the same effect is the passage in which James uses the words of our Saviour above

quoted, (James v. 12.) For this rash swearing has always prevailed in the world, notwithstanding that it is a profanation of the name of God. If you refer the words, *not at all*, to the act itself, as if every oath, without exception, were unlawful, what will be the use of the explanation which immediately follows—Neither by heaven, neither by the earth, &c.? These words make it clear, that the object in view was to meet the cavils by which the Jews thought they could extenuate their fault.

27. Every person of sound judgment must now see that in that passage our Lord merely condemned those oaths which were forbidden by the Law. For he who in his life exhibited a model of the perfection which he taught, did not object to oaths whenever the occasion required them; and the disciples, who doubtless in all things obeyed their Master, followed the same rule. Who will dare to say that Paul would have sworn (Rom. i. 9; 2 Cor. i. 23) if an oath had been altogether forbidden? But when the occasion calls for it, he adjures without any scruple, and sometimes even imprecates. The question, however, is not yet disposed of. For some think that the only oaths exempted from the prohibition are public oaths, such as those which are administered to us by the magistrate, or independent states employ in ratifying treaties, or the people take when they swear allegiance to their sovereign, or the soldier in the case of the military oath, and others of a similar description. To this class they refer (and justly) those protestations in the writings of Paul, which assert the dignity of the Gospel; since the Apostles, in discharging their office, were not private individuals, but the public servants of God. I certainly deny not that such oaths are the safest, because they are most strongly supported by passages of Scripture. The magistrate is enjoined, in a doubtful matter, to put the witness upon oath; and he in his turn to answer upon oath; and an Apostle says, that in this way there is an end of all strife, (Heb. vi. 16.) In this commandment, both parties are fully approved. Nay, we may observe, that among the ancient heathens a public and solemn oath was held in great reverence, while those common oaths which were indiscriminately used were in little or no estimation, as if they



thought that, in regard to them, the Deity did not interpose. Private oaths used soberly, sacredly, and reverently, on necessary occasions, it were perilous to condemn, supported as they are by reason and example. For if private individuals are permitted, in a grave and serious matter, to appeal to God as a judge, much more may they appeal to him as a witness. Your brother charges you with perfidy. You, as bound by the duties of charity, labour to clear yourself from the charge. He will on no account be satisfied. If, through his obstinate malice, your good name is brought into jeopardy, you can appeal, without offence, to the judgment of God, that he may in time manifest your innocence. If the terms are weighed, it will be found that it is a less matter to call upon him to be witness; and I therefore see not how it can be called unlawful to do so. And there is no want of examples. If it is pretended that the oath which Abraham and Isaac made with Abimelech was of a public nature, that by which Jacob and Laban bound themselves in mutual league was private. Boaz, though a private man, confirmed his promise of marriage to Ruth in the same way. Obadiah, too, a just man, and one that feared God, though a private individual, in seeking to persuade Elijah, asseverates with an oath.<sup>1</sup> I hold, therefore, that there is no better rule than so to regulate our oaths that they shall neither be rash, frivolous, promiscuous, nor passionate, but be made to serve a just necessity; in other words, to vindicate the glory of God, or promote the edification of a brother. This is the end of the Commandment.

### Fourth Commandment.

REMEMBER THE SABBATH DAY TO KEEP IT HOLY. SIX DAYS SHALT THOU LABOUR AND DO ALL THY WORK: BUT THE SEVENTH DAY IS THE SABBATH OF THE LORD THY GOD. IN IT THOU SHALT NOT DO ANY WORK, &c.

28. The purport of the commandment is, that being dead to our own affections and works, we meditate on the king-

<sup>1</sup> Gen. xxi. 24; xxvi. 31; xxxi. 53; Ruth iii. 13; 1 Kings xviii. 10.

dom of God, and in order to such meditation, have recourse to the means which he has appointed. But as this commandment stands in peculiar circumstances apart from the others, the mode of exposition must be somewhat different. Early Christian writers are wont to call it typical, as containing the external observance of a day which was abolished with the other types on the advent of Christ. This is indeed true; but it leaves the half of the matter untouched. Wherefore, we must look deeper for our exposition, and attend to three cases in which it appears to me that the observance of this commandment consists. First, under the rest of the seventh day, the divine Lawgiver meant to furnish the people of Israel with a type of the spiritual rest by which believers were to cease from their own works, and allow God to work in them. Secondly, he meant that there should be a stated day on which they should assemble to hear the Law, and perform religious rites, or which, at least, they should specially employ in meditating on his works, and be thereby trained to piety. Thirdly, he meant that servants, and those who lived under the authority of others, should be indulged with a day of rest, and thus have some intermission from labour.

29. We are taught in many passages<sup>1</sup> that this adumbration of spiritual rest held a primary place in the Sabbath. Indeed, there is no commandment the observance of which the Almighty more strictly enforces. When he would intimate by the Prophets that religion was entirely subverted, he complains that his sabbaths were polluted, violated, not kept, not hallowed; as if, after it was neglected, there remained nothing in which he could be honoured. The observance of it he eulogises in the highest terms, and hence, among other divine privileges, the faithful set an extraordinary value on the revelation of the Sabbath. In Nehemiah, the Levites, in the public assembly, thus speak: "Thou madest known unto them thy holy sabbath, and commandedst them precepts, statutes, and laws, by the hand of Moses thy servant." You see the singular honour

<sup>1</sup> Num. xiii. 22; Ezek. xx. 12; xxii. 8; xxiii. 38; Jer. xvii. 21, 22, 27; Isaiah lvi. 2; Neh. ix. 14.

which it holds among all the precepts of the Law. All this tends to celebrate the dignity of the mystery, which is most admirably expressed by Moses and Ezekiel. Thus in Exodus: "Verily my sabbaths shall ye keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you. Ye shall keep my sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you: every one that defileth it shall surely be put to death: for whosoever doeth any work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people. Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord: whosoever doeth any work in the sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever," (Exodus xxxi. 13-17.) Ezekiel is still more full, but the sum of what he says amounts to this: that the sabbath is a sign by which Israel might know that God is their sanctifier. If our sanctification consists in the mortification of our own will, the analogy between the external sign and the thing signified is most appropriate. We must rest entirely, in order that God may work in us; we must resign our own will, yield up our heart, and abandon all the lusts of the flesh. In short, we must desist from all the acts of our own mind, that God working in us, we may rest in him, as the Apostle also teaches, (Heb. iii. 13; iv. 3, 9.)

30. This complete cessation was represented to the Jews by the observance of one day in seven, which, that it might be more religiously attended to, the Lord recommended by his own example. For it is no small incitement to the zeal of man to know that he is engaged in imitating his Creator. Should any one expect some secret meaning in the number seven, this being in Scripture the number for perfection, it may have been selected, not without cause, to denote perpetuity. In accordance with this, Moses concludes his description of the succession of day and night on the same day on which he relates that the Lord rested from his works. Another probable reason for the number may be, that the



Lord intended that the Sabbath never should be completed before the arrival of the last day. We here begin our blessed rest in him, and daily make new progress in it ; but because we must still wage an incessant warfare with the flesh, it shall not be consummated until the fulfilment of the prophecy of Isaiah : "From one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord," (Isaiah lxvi. 23 ;) in other words, when God shall be "all in all," (1 Cor. xv. 28.) It may seem, therefore, that by the seventh day the Lord delineated to his people the future perfection of his sabbath on the last day, that by continual meditation on the sabbath, they might throughout their whole lives aspire to this perfection.

31. Should these remarks on the number seem to any somewhat far-fetched, I have no objection to their taking it more simply : that the Lord appointed a certain day on which his people might be trained, under the tutelage of the Law, to meditate constantly on the spiritual rest, and fixed upon the seventh, either because he foresaw it would be sufficient, or in order that his own example might operate as a stronger stimulus ; or, at least, to remind men that the Sabbath was appointed for no other purpose than to render them conformable to their Creator. It is of little consequence which of these be adopted, provided we lose not sight of the principal thing delineated, viz., the mystery of perpetual resting from our works. To the contemplation of this, the Jews were every now and then called by the prophets, lest they should think a carnal cessation from labour sufficient. Beside the passages already quoted, there is the following : "If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day ; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable ; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words : then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord," (Isaiah lviii. 13, 14.) Still there can be no doubt, that, on the advent of our Lord Jesus Christ, the ceremonial part of the commandment was abolished. He is the truth, at whose presence all the em-

blems vanish; the body, at the sight of which the shadows disappear. He, I say, is the true completion of the sabbath: “We are buried with him by baptism unto death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we should walk in newness of life,” (Rom. vi. 4.) Hence, as the Apostle elsewhere says, “Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days; which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ,” (Col. ii. 16, 17;) meaning by body the whole essence of the truth, as is well explained in that passage. This is not contented with one day, but requires the whole course of our lives, until being completely dead to ourselves, we are filled with the life of God. Christians, therefore, should have nothing to do with a superstitious observance of days.

32. The two other cases ought not to be classed with ancient shadows, but are adapted to every age. The sabbath being abrogated, there is still room among us, first, to assemble on stated days for the hearing of the word, the breaking of the mystical bread, and public<sup>3</sup> prayer; and, secondly, to give our servants and labourers relaxation from labour. It cannot be doubted that the Lord provided for both in the commandment of the Sabbath. The former is abundantly evinced by the mere practice of the Jews. The latter Moses has expressed in Deuteronomy in the following terms: “The seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant;—that thy man-servant and thy maid-servant may rest as well as thou,” (Deut. v. 14.) Likewise in Exodus, “That thine ox and thine ass may rest, and the son of thy handmaid, and the stranger, may be refreshed,” (Exod. xxiii. 12.) Who can deny that both are equally applicable to us as to the Jews? Religious meetings are enjoined us by the word of God; their necessity, experience itself sufficiently demonstrates. But unless these meetings are stated, and have fixed days allotted to them, how can they be held? We must, as the Apostle expresses

it, do all things decently and in order, (1 Cor. xiv. 40.) So impossible, however, would it be to preserve decency and order without this politic arrangement, that the dissolution of it would instantly lead to the disturbance and ruin of the Church. But if the reason for which the Lord appointed a sabbath to the Jews is equally applicable to us, no man can assert that it is a matter with which we have nothing to do. Our most provident and indulgent Parent has been pleased to provide for our wants not less than for the wants of the Jews. Why, it may be asked, do we not hold daily meetings, and thus avoid the distinction of days? Would that we were privileged to do so! Spiritual wisdom undoubtedly deserves to have some portion of every day devoted to it. But if, owing to the weakness of many, daily meetings cannot be held, and charity will not allow us to exact more of them, why should we not adopt the rule which the will of God has obviously imposed upon us?

33. I am obliged to dwell a little longer on this, because some restless spirits are now making an outcry about the observance of the Lord's day. They complain that Christian people are trained in Judaism, because some observance of days is retained. My reply is, That those days are observed by us without Judaism, because in this matter we differ widely from the Jews. We do not celebrate it with most minute formality, as a ceremony by which we imagine that a spiritual mystery is typified, but we adopt it as a necessary remedy for preserving order in the Church. Paul informs us that Christians are not to be judged in respect of its observance, because it is a shadow of something to come, (Col. ii. 16;) and, accordingly, he expresses a fear lest his labour among the Galatians should prove in vain, because they still observed days, (Gal. iv. 10, 11.) And he tells the Romans that it is superstitious to make one day differ from another, (Rom. xiv. 5.) But who, except those restless men, does not see what the observance is to which the Apostle refers? Those persons had no regard to that politic and ecclesiastical arrangement,<sup>1</sup> but by retaining

<sup>1</sup> "Finem istum politicum et ecclesiasticum ordinem."—French, "la police et ordre en l'Eglise;" policy and order in the Church.



the days as types of spiritual things, they in so far obscured the glory of Christ, and the light of the Gospel. They did not desist from manual labour on the ground of its interfering with sacred study and meditation, but as a kind of religious observance; because they dreamed that by their cessation from labour, they were cultivating the mysteries which had of old been committed to them. It was, I say, against this preposterous observance of days that the Apostle inveighs, and not against that legitimate selection which is subservient to the peace of Christian society. For in the churches established by him, this was the use for which the Sabbath was retained. He tells the Corinthians to set the first day apart for collecting contributions for the relief of their brethren at Jerusalem, (1 Cor. xvi. 2.) If superstition is dreaded, there was more danger in keeping the Jewish sabbath than the Lord's day as Christians now do. It being expedient to overthrow superstition, the Jewish holy day was abolished; and as a thing necessary to retain decency, order, and peace, in the Church, another day was appointed for that purpose.

34. It was not, however, without a reason that the early Christians substituted what we call the Lord's day for the Sabbath. The resurrection of our Lord being the end and accomplishment of that true rest which the ancient sabbath typified, this day, by which types were abolished, serves to warn Christians against adhering to a shadowy ceremony. I do not cling so to the number seven as to bring the Church under bondage to it, nor do I condemn churches for holding their meetings on other solemn days, provided they guard against superstition. This they will do if they employ those days merely for the observance of discipline and regular order. The whole may be thus summed up: As the truth was delivered typically to the Jews, so it is imparted to us without figure; first, that during our whole lives we may aim at a constant rest from our own works, in order that the Lord may work in us by his Spirit; secondly, that every individual, as he has opportunity, may diligently exercise himself in private, in pious meditation on the works of God, and, at the same time, that all may observe the legitimate

order appointed by the Church, for the hearing of the word, the administration of the sacraments, and public prayer : and, thirdly, that we may avoid oppressing those who are subject to us. In this way, we get quit of the trifling of the false prophets, who in later times instilled Jewish ideas into the people, alleging that nothing was abrogated but what was ceremonial in the commandment,<sup>1</sup> (this they term in their language the taxation of the seventh day,) while the moral part remains, viz., the observance of one day in seven.<sup>2</sup> But this is nothing else than to insult the Jews, by changing the day, and yet mentally attributing to it the same sanctity ; thus retaining the same typical distinction of days as had place among the Jews. And of a truth, we see what profit they have made by such a doctrine. Those who cling to their constitutions go thrice as far as the Jews in the gross and carnal superstition of sabbatism ; so that the rebukes which we read in Isaiah (Isa. i. 13 ; lviii. 13) apply as much to those of the present day,<sup>3</sup> as to those to whom the Prophet addressed them. We must be careful, however, to observe the general doctrine, viz., in order that religion may neither be lost nor languish among us, we must diligently attend on our religious assemblies, and duly avail ourselves of those external aids which tend to promote the worship of God.

### **Fifth Commandment.**

HONOUR THY FATHER AND THY MOTHER, THAT THY DAYS  
MAY BE LONG UPON THE LAND WHICH THE LORD THY  
GOD GIVETH THEE.

35. The end of this commandment is, that since the Lord takes pleasure in the preservation of his own ordinance, the

<sup>1</sup> As to this liberty, see Socrates, Hist. Trip. Lib. ix. c. 38.

<sup>2</sup> French, "ne discernans entre le Dimanche et le Sabbath autrement, sinon que le septième jour estoit abrogé qu'on gardoit pour lors, mais qu'il en falloit neantmoins garder un ;"—making no other distinction between the Sunday and the Sabbath, save that the seventh day, which was kept till then, was abrogated, but that it was nevertheless necessary to keep some one day.

<sup>3</sup> French, "leur conviendroyent mieux ;"—would be more applicable to them.

degrees of dignity appointed by him must be held inviolable. The sum of the commandment, therefore, will be, that we are to look up to those whom the Lord has set over us, yielding them honour, gratitude, and obedience. Hence it follows, that every thing in the way of contempt, ingratitude, or disobedience, is forbidden. For the term *honour* has this extent of meaning in Scripture. Thus when the Apostle says, "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour," (1 Tim. v. 17,) he refers not only to the reverence which is due to them, but to the recompense to which their services are entitled. But as this command to submit is very repugnant to the perversity of the human mind, (which, puffed up with ambitious longings, will scarcely allow itself to be subject,) that superiority which is most attractive and least invidious is set forth as an example calculated to soften and bend our minds to habits of submission. From that subjection which is most easily endured, the Lord gradually accustoms us to every kind of legitimate subjection, the same principle regulating all. For to those whom he raises to eminence, he communicates his authority, in so far as necessary to maintain their station. The titles of Father, God, and Lord, all meet in him alone, and hence, whenever any one of them is mentioned, our mind should be impressed with the same feeling of reverence. Those, therefore, to whom he imparts such titles, he distinguishes by some small spark of his refulgence, so as to entitle them to honour, each in his own place. In this way, we must consider that our earthly father possesses something of a divine nature in him, because there is some reason for his bearing a divine title, and that he who is our prince and ruler is admitted to some communion of honour with God.

36. Wherefore, we ought to have no doubt that the Lord here lays down this universal rule, viz., that knowing how every individual is set over us by his appointment, we should pay him reverence, gratitude, obedience, and every duty in our power. And it makes no difference whether those on whom the honour is conferred are deserving or not. Be they what they may, the Almighty, by conferring their station upon them, shows that he would have them honoured.



The commandment specifies the reverence due to those to whom we owe our being. This Nature herself should in some measure teach us. For they are monsters, and not men, who petulantly and contumeliously violate the paternal authority. Hence, the Lord orders all who rebel against their parents to be put to death, they being, as it were, unworthy of the light in paying no deference to those to whom they are indebted for beholding it. And it is evident, from the various appendices to the Law, that we were correct in stating, that the honour here referred to consists of three parts, reverence, obedience, and gratitude. The first of these the Lord enforces, when he commands that whoso curseth his father or his mother shall be put to death. In this way he avenges insult and contempt. The second he enforces, when he denounces the punishment of death on disobedient and rebellious children. To the third belongs our Saviour's declaration, that God requires us to do good to our parents, (Matth. xv.) And whenever Paul mentions this commandment, he interprets it as enjoining obedience.<sup>1</sup>

37. A promise is added by way of recommendation, the better to remind us how pleasing to God is the submission which is here required. Paul applies that stimulus to rouse us from our lethargy, when he calls this the first commandment with promise; the promise contained in the First Table not being specially appropriated to any one commandment, but extended to the whole law. Moreover, the sense in which the promise is to be taken is as follows:—The Lord spoke to the Israelites specially of the land which he had promised them for an inheritance. If, then, the possession of the land was an earnest of the divine favour, we cannot wonder if the Lord was pleased to testify his favour, by bestowing long life, as in this way they were able long to enjoy his kindness. The meaning therefore is: Honour thy father and thy mother, that thou mayst be able, during the course of a long life, to enjoy the possession of the land which is to be given thee in testimony of my favour. But, as the whole

<sup>1</sup> Exod. xxi. 17; Levit. xx. 9; Prov. xx. 20; Deut. xxi. 18; Matth. xv. 4; Eph. vi. 1; Coloss. iii. 20.

earth is blessed to believers, we justly class the present life among the number of divine blessings. Whence this promise has, in like manner, reference to us also, inasmuch as the duration of the present life is a proof of the divine benevolence toward us. It is not promised to us, nor was it promised to the Jews, as if in itself it constituted happiness, but because it is an ordinary symbol of the divine favour to the pious. Wherefore, if any one who is obedient to parents happens to be cut off before mature age, (a thing which not unfrequently happens,) the Lord nevertheless adheres to his promise as steadily as when he bestows a hundred acres of land where he had promised only one. The whole lies in this: We must consider that long life is promised only in so far as it is a blessing from God, and that it is a blessing only in so far as it is a manifestation of divine favour. This, however, he testifies and truly manifests to his servants more richly and substantially by death.

38. Moreover, while the Lord promises the blessing of present life to children who show proper respect to their parents, he, at the same time, intimates that an inevitable curse is impending over the rebellious and disobedient; and, that it may not fail of execution, he, in his Law, pronounces sentence of death upon them, and orders it to be inflicted. If they escape the judgment, he, in some way or other, will execute vengeance. For we see how great a number of this description of individuals fall either in battle or in brawls; others of them are overtaken by unwonted disasters, and almost all are a proof that the threatening is not used in vain. But if any do escape till extreme old age, yet, because deprived of the blessing of God in this life, they only languish on in wickedness, and are reserved for severer punishment in the world to come, they are far from participating in the blessing promised to obedient children. It ought to be observed by the way, that we are ordered to obey parents only in the Lord. This is clear from the principle already laid down: for the place which they occupy is one to which the Lord has exalted them, by communicating to them a portion of his own honour. Therefore the submission yielded to them should be a step in our ascent to the Supreme.

Parent, and hence, if they instigate us to transgress the law, they deserve not to be regarded as parents, but as strangers attempting to seduce us from obedience to our true Father. The same holds in the case of rulers, masters, and superiors of every description. For it were unbecoming and absurd that the honour of God should be impaired by their exaltation—an exaltation which, being derived from him, ought to lead us up to him.<sup>1</sup>

## Sixth Commandment.

THOU SHALT NOT KILL.

39. The purport of this commandment is, that since the Lord has bound the whole human race by a kind of unity, the safety of all ought to be considered as entrusted to each. In general, therefore, all violence and injustice, and every kind of harm from which our neighbour's body suffers, is prohibited. Accordingly, we are required faithfully to do what in us lies to defend the life of our neighbour, to promote whatever tends to his tranquillity, to be vigilant in warding off harm, and, when danger comes, to assist in removing it. Remembering that the Divine Lawgiver thus speaks, consider, moreover, that he requires you to apply the same rule in regulating your mind. It were ridiculous, that he, who sees the thoughts of the heart, and has special regard to them, should train the body only to rectitude. This commandment, therefore, prohibits the murder of the heart, and requires a sincere desire to preserve our brother's life. The hand, indeed, commits the murder, but the mind, under the influence of wrath and hatred, conceives it. How can you be angry with your brother, without passionately longing to do him harm? If you must not be angry with him, neither must you hate him, hatred being nothing but inveterate anger. However you may disguise the fact, or endeavour

<sup>1</sup> The French adds, “et la doit plustost augmenter, qu'amoindrir confirmer que violer;”—and ought to augment rather than diminish, to confirm rather than violate it.



to escape from it by vain pretexts, where either wrath or hatred is, there is an inclination to do mischief. If you still persist in tergiversation, the mouth of the Spirit has declared, that "whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer," (1 John iii. 15;) and the mouth of our Saviour has declared, that "whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire," (Matth. v. 22.)

40. Scripture notes a twofold equity on which this commandment is founded. Man is both the image of God and our flesh. Wherefore, if we would not violate the image of God, we must hold the person of man sacred—if we would not divest ourselves of humanity, we must cherish our own flesh. The practical inference to be drawn from the redemption and gift of Christ will be elsewhere considered.<sup>1</sup> The Lord has been pleased to direct our attention to these two natural considerations as inducements to watch over our neighbour's preservation, viz., to revere the divine image impressed upon him, and embrace our own flesh. To be clear of the crime of murder, it is not enough to refrain from shedding man's blood. If in act you perpetrate, if in endeavour you plot, if in wish and design you conceive what is adverse to another's safety, you have the guilt of murder. On the other hand, if you do not according to your means and opportunity study to defend his safety, by that inhumanity you violate the law. But if the safety of the body is so carefully provided for, we may hence infer how much care and exertion is due to the safety of the soul, which is of immeasurably higher value in the sight of God.

## Seventh Commandment.

THOU SHALT NOT COMMIT ADULTERY.

41. The purport of this commandment is, that as God loves

<sup>1</sup> Book III. Chap. vii. sec. 4-7; Chap. xx. sec. 38, 45; Book IV. Chap. i. sec. 13-19; Chap. xviii. sec. 38, 40.

chastity and purity, we ought to guard against all uncleanness. The substance of the commandment therefore is, that we must not defile ourselves with any impurity or libidinous excess. To this corresponds the affirmative, that we must regulate every part of our conduct chastely and continently. The thing expressly forbidden is adultery, to which lust naturally tends, that its filthiness (being of a grosser and more palpable form, in as much as it casts a stain even on the body) may dispose us to abominate every form of lust. As the law under which man was created was not to lead a life of solitude, but enjoy a help meet for him, and ever since he fell under the curse the necessity for this mode of life is increased; the Lord made the requisite provision for us in this respect by the institution of marriage, which, entered into under his authority, he has also sanctified with his blessing. Hence, it is evident, that any mode of cohabitation different from marriage is cursed in his sight, and that the conjugal relation was ordained as a necessary means of preventing us from giving way to unbridled lust. Let us beware, therefore, of yielding to indulgence, seeing we are assured that the curse of God lies on every man and woman cohabiting without marriage.

42. Now, since natural feeling and the passions inflamed by the fall make the marriage tie doubly necessary, save in the case of those whom God has by special grace exempted, let every individual consider how the case stands with himself. [Virginity, I admit, is a virtue not to be despised; but since it is denied to some, and to others granted only for a season, those who are assailed by incontinence, and unable successfully to war against it, should betake themselves to the remedy of marriage, and thus cultivate chastity in the way of their calling.] Those incapable of self-restraint, if they apply not to the remedy allowed and provided for intemperance, war with God and resist his ordinance. And let no man tell me (as many in the present day do) that he can do all things, God helping! The help of God is present with those only who walk in his ways, (Ps. xci. 14,) that is, in his calling, from which all withdraw themselves who, omitting the remedies provided by God, vainly and presump-

tuously strive to struggle with and surmount their natural feelings. That continence is a special gift from God, and of the class of those which are not bestowed indiscriminately on the whole body of the Church, but only on a few of its members, our Lord affirms, (Matth. xix. 12.) He first describes a certain class of individuals who have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake; that is, in order that they may be able to devote themselves with more liberty and less restraint to the things of heaven. But lest any one should suppose that such a sacrifice was in every man's power, he had shown a little before that all are not capable, but those only to whom it is specially given from above. Hence he concludes, "He that is able to receive it, let him receive it." Paul asserts the same thing still more plainly when he says, "Every man has his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that," (1 Cor. vii. 7.)

43. Since we are reminded by an express declaration, that it is not in every man's power to live chaste in celibacy, although it may be his most strenuous study and aim to do so—that it is a special grace which the Lord bestows only on certain individuals, in order that they may be less encumbered in his service, do we not oppose God, and nature as constituted by him, if we do not accommodate our mode of life to the measure of our ability? The Lord prohibits fornication, therefore he requires purity and chastity. The only method which each has of preserving it is to measure himself by his capacity. Let no man rashly despise matrimony as a thing useless or superfluous to him; let no man long for celibacy unless he is able to dispense with the married state. Nor even here let him consult the tranquillity or convenience of the flesh, save only that, freed from this tie, he may be the readier and more prepared for all the offices of piety. And since there are many on whom this blessing is conferred only for a time, let every one, in abstaining from marriage, do it so long as he is fit to endure celibacy. If he has not the power of subduing his passion, let him understand that the Lord has made it obligatory on him to marry. The Apostle shows this when he enjoins:



“Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband.” “If they cannot contain, let them marry.” He first intimates that the greater part of men are liable to incontinence; and then of those so liable, he orders all, without exception, to have recourse to the only remedy by which unchastity may be obviated. The incontinent, therefore, in neglecting to cure their infirmity by this means, sin by the very circumstance of disobeying the Apostle’s command. And let not a man flatter himself, that because he abstains from the outward act he cannot be accused of unchastity. His mind may in the meantime be inwardly inflamed with lust. For Paul’s definition of chastity is purity of mind, combined with purity of body. “The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and spirit,” (1 Cor. vii. 34.) Therefore, when he gives a reason for the former precept, he not only says that it is better to marry than to live in fornication, but that it is better to marry than to burn.

44. Moreover, when spouses are made aware that their union is blessed by the Lord, they are thereby reminded that they must not give way to intemperate and unrestrained indulgence. For though honourable wedlock veils the turpitude of incontinence, it does not follow that it ought forthwith to become a stimulus to it. Wherefore, let spouses consider that all things are not lawful for them. Let there be sobriety in the behaviour of the husband toward the wife, and of the wife in her turn toward the husband; each so acting as not to do any thing unbecoming the dignity and temperance of married life. Marriage contracted in the Lord ought to exhibit measure and modesty—not run to the extreme of wantonness. This excess Ambrose censured gravely, but not undeservedly, when he described the man who shows no modesty or comeliness in conjugal intercourse, as committing adultery with his wife.<sup>1</sup> Lastly, let us consider who the Lawgiver is that thus condemns fornication: even He who, as he is entitled to possess us entirely,

<sup>1</sup> See Ambros. Lib. de Philosoph., quoted by Augustine in his book, *Contra Julian*, Lib. ii.

requires integrity of body, soul, and spirit. Therefore, while he forbids fornication, he at the same time forbids us to lay snares for our neighbour's chastity by lascivious attire, obscene gestures, and impure conversation. There was reason in the remark made by Archelaus to a youth clothed effeminately and over-luxuriously, that it mattered not in what part his wantonness appeared. We must have respect to God, who abhors all contamination, whatever be the part of soul or body in which it appears. And that there may be no doubt about it, let us remember, that what the Lord here commends is chastity. If he requires chastity, he condemns every thing which is opposed to it. Therefore, if you aspire to obedience, let not your mind burn within with evil concupiscence, your eyes wanton after corrupting objects, nor your body be decked for allurement; let neither your tongue by filthy speeches, nor your appetite by intemperance, entice the mind to corresponding thoughts. All vices of this description are a kind of stains which despoil chastity of its purity.

### **Eighth Commandment.**

THOU SHALT NOT STEAL.

The purport is, that injustice being an abomination to God, we must render to every man his due. In substance, then, the commandment forbids us to long after other men's goods, and, accordingly, requires every man to exert himself honestly in preserving his own. For we must consider, that what each individual possesses has not fallen to him by chance, but by the distribution of the sovereign Lord of all, that no one can pervert his means to bad purposes without committing a fraud on a divine dispensation. There are very many kinds of theft. One consists in violence, as when a man's goods are forcibly plundered and carried off; another in malicious imposture, as when they are fraudulently intercepted; a third in the more hidden craft which takes possession of them with a semblance of justice; and a fourth in

sycophancy, which wiles them away under the pretence of donation. But not to dwell too long in enumerating the different classes, we know that all the arts by which we obtain possession of the goods and money of our neighbours, for sincere affection substituting an eagerness to deceive or injure them in any way, are to be regarded as thefts. Though they may be obtained by an action at law, a different decision is given by God. He sees the long train of deception by which the man of craft begins to lay nets for his more simple neighbour, until he entangles him in its meshes—sees the harsh and cruel laws by which the more powerful oppresses and crushes the feeble—sees the enticements by which the more wily baits the hook for the less wary, though all these escape the judgment of man, and no cognisance is taken of them. Nor is the violation of this commandment confined to money, or merchandise, or lands, but extends to every kind of right; for we defraud our neighbours to their hurt if we decline any of the duties which we are bound to perform towards them. If an agent or an indolent steward wastes the substance of his employer, or does not give due heed to the management of his property; if he unjustly squanders or luxuriously wastes the means entrusted to him; if a servant holds his master in derision, divulges his secrets, or in any way is treacherous to his life or his goods; if, on the other hand, a master cruelly torments his household, he is guilty of theft before God; since every one who, in the exercise of his calling, performs not what he owes to others, keeps back, or makes away with what does not belong to him.

46. This commandment, therefore, we shall duly obey, if, contented with our own lot, we study to acquire nothing but honest and lawful gain; if we long not to grow rich by injustice, nor to plunder our neighbour of his goods, that our own may thereby be increased; if we hasten not to heap up wealth cruelly wrung from the blood of others; if we do not, by means lawful and unlawful, with excessive eagerness scrape together whatever may glut our avarice or meet our prodigality. On the other hand, let it be our constant aim faithfully to lend our counsel and aid to all so as to



assist them in retaining their property ; or if we have to do with the perfidious or crafty, let us rather be prepared to yield somewhat of our right than to contend with them. And not only so, but let us contribute to the relief of those whom we see under the pressure of difficulties, assisting their want out of our abundance. Lastly, let each of us consider how far he is bound in duty to others, and in good faith pay what we owe. In the same way, let the people pay all due honour to their rulers, submit patiently to their authority, obey their laws and orders, and decline nothing which they can bear without sacrificing the favour of God. Let rulers, again, take due charge of their people, preserve the public peace, protect the good, curb the bad, and conduct themselves throughout as those who must render an account of their office to God, the Judge of all. Let the ministers of churches faithfully give heed to the ministry of the word, and not corrupt the doctrine of salvation, but deliver it purely and sincerely to the people of God. Let them teach not merely by doctrine, but by example ; in short, let them act the part of good shepherds towards their flocks. Let the people, in their turn, receive them as the messengers and apostles of God, render them the honour which their Supreme Master has bestowed on them, and supply them with such things as are necessary for their livelihood. Let parents be careful to bring up, guide, and teach their children as a trust committed to them by God. Let them not exasperate or alienate them by cruelty, but cherish and embrace them with the lenity and indulgence which becomes their character. The regard due to parents from their children has already been adverted to. Let the young respect those advanced in years, as the Lord has been pleased to make that age honourable. Let the aged also, by their prudence and their experience, (in which they are far superior,) guide the feebleness of youth, not assailing them with harsh and clamorous invectives, but tempering strictness with ease and affability. Let servants show themselves diligent and respectful in obeying their masters, and this not with eye-service, but from the heart, as the servants of God. Let masters also not be stern and disobliging to their ser-

vants, nor harass them with excessive asperity, nor treat them with insult, but rather let them acknowledge them as brethren and fellow-servants of our heavenly Master, whom, therefore, they are bound to treat with mutual love and kindness. Let every one, I say, thus consider what in his own place and order he owes to his neighbours, and pay what he owes. Moreover, we must always have a reference to the Lawgiver, and so remember that the law requiring us to promote and defend the interest and convenience of our fellow-men, applies equally to our minds and our hands.

### **Ninth Commandment.**

THOU SHALT NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS AGAINST THY  
NEIGHBOUR.

47. The purport of the commandment is, since God, who is truth, abhors falsehood, we must cultivate unfeigned truth towards each other. The sum, therefore, will be, that we must not by calumnies and false accusations injure our neighbour's name, or by falsehood impair his fortunes; in fine, that we must not injure any one from petulance, or a love of evil-speaking. To this prohibition corresponds the command, that we must faithfully assist every one, as far as in us lies, in asserting the truth, for the maintenance of his good name and his estate. The Lord seems to have intended to explain the commandment in these words: "Thou shalt not raise a false report: put not thine hand with the wicked to be an unrighteous witness." "Keep thee far from a false matter," (Exod. xxiii. 1, 7.) In another passage, he not only prohibits that species of falsehood which consists in acting the part of tale-bearers among the people, but says, "Neither shalt thou stand against the blood of thy neighbour," (Lev. xix. 16.) Both transgressions are distinctly prohibited. Indeed, there can be no doubt, that as in the previous commandment he prohibited cruelty, unchastity, and avarice, so here he prohibits falsehood, which consists of the two parts to which we have adverted. By malignant or

vicious detraction, we sin against our neighbour's good name : by lying, sometimes even by casting a slur upon him, we injure him in his estate. It makes no difference whether you suppose that formal and judicial testimony is here intended, or the ordinary testimony which is given in private conversation. For we must always recur to the consideration, that for each kind of transgression one species is set forth by way of example, that to it the others may be referred, and that the species chiefly selected, is that in which the turpitude of the transgression is most apparent. It seems proper, however, to extend it more generally to calumny and sinister insinuations by which our neighbours are unjustly aggrieved. For falsehood in a court of justice is always accompanied with perjury. But against perjury, in so far as it profanes and violates the name of God, there is a sufficient provision in the third commandment. Hence the legitimate observance of this precept consists in employing the tongue in the maintenance of truth, so as to promote both the good name and the prosperity of our neighbour. The equity of this is perfectly clear. For if a good name is more precious than riches, a man, in being robbed of his good name, is no less injured than if he were robbed of his goods ; while, in the latter case, false testimony is sometimes not less injurious than rapine committed by the hand.

48. And yet it is strange, with what supine security men everywhere sin in this respect. Indeed, very few are found who do not notoriously labour under this disease : such is the envenomed delight we take both in prying into and exposing our neighbour's faults. Let us not imagine it is a sufficient excuse to say that on many occasions our statements are not false. He who forbids us to defame our neighbour's reputation by falsehood, desires us to keep it untarnished in so far as truth will permit. Though the commandment is only directed against falsehood, it intimates that the preservation of our neighbour's good name is recommended. It ought to be a sufficient inducement to us to guard our neighbour's good name, that God takes an interest in it. Wherefore, evil-speaking in general is undoubtedly condemned. Moreover, by evil-speaking, we



understand not the rebuke which is administered with a view of correcting; not accusation or judicial decision, by which evil is sought to be remedied; not public censure, which tends to strike terror into other offenders; not the disclosure made to those whose safety depends on being forewarned, lest unawares they should be brought into danger, but the odious crimination which springs from a malicious and petulant love of slander. Nay, the commandment extends so far as to include that scurrilous affected urbanity, instinct with invective, by which the failings of others, under an appearance of sportiveness, are bitterly assailed, as some are wont to do, who court the praise of wit, though it should call forth a blush, or inflict a bitter pang. By petulance of this description, our brethren are sometimes grievously wounded.<sup>1</sup> But if we turn our eye to the Lawgiver, whose just authority extends over the ears and the mind, as well as the tongue, we cannot fail to perceive that eagerness to listen to slander, and an unbecoming proneness to censorious judgment, are here forbidden. It were absurd to suppose that God hates the disease of evil-speaking in the tongue, and yet disapproves not of its malignity in the mind. Wherefore, if the true fear and love of God dwell in us, we must endeavour, as far as is lawful and expedient, and as far as charity admits, neither to listen nor give utterance to bitter and acrimonious charges, nor rashly entertain sinister suspicions. As just interpreters of the words and the actions of other men, let us candidly maintain the honour due to them by our judgment, our ear, and our tongue.

<sup>1</sup> The French is, "D'avantage ce precepte s'estend jusques là, que nous n'affections point une plaisanterie d'honnesteté et une grace de brocarder et mordre en riant les uns et les autres, comme sont aucuns, qui se baignent quand ils peuvent faire vergogne à quelqu'un: car par telle intemperance souventes fois quelque marque demeure sur l'homme qu'on a ainsi noté."—Moreover, the commandment extends thus far: we must not affect a good humoured pleasantry and grace in nicknaming, and with a smile say cutting things of others, as some persons do, who are delighted when they can make another blush: by such intemperance a stigma is often fastened on the individual thus attacked.

## Tenth Commandment.

THOU SHALT NOT COVET THY NEIGHBOUR'S HOUSE, THOU SHALT NOT COVET THY NEIGHBOUR'S WIFE, NOR HIS MAN-SERVANT, NOR HIS MAID-SERVANT, NOR HIS OX, NOR HIS ASS, NOR ANY THING THAT IS THY NEIGHBOUR'S.

The purport is: Since the Lord would have the whole soul pervaded with love, any feeling of an adverse nature must be banished from our minds. The sum, therefore, will be, that no thought be permitted to insinuate itself into our minds, and inflame them with a noxious concupiscence tending to our neighbour's loss. To this corresponds the contrary precept, that every thing which we conceive, deliberate, will, or design, be conjoined with the good and advantage of our neighbour. But here it seems we are met with a great and perplexing difficulty. For if it was correctly said above, that under the words adultery and theft, lust and an intention to injure and deceive are prohibited, it may seem superfluous afterwards to employ a separate commandment to prohibit a covetous desire of our neighbour's goods. The difficulty will easily be removed by distinguishing between *design* and *covetousness*.<sup>1</sup> Design, such as we have spoken of in the previous commandments, is a deliberate consent of the will, after passion has taken possession of the mind. Covetousness may exist without such deliberation and assent, when the mind is only stimulated and tickled by vain and perverse objects. As, therefore, the Lord previously ordered that charity should regulate our wishes, studies, and actions, so he now orders us to regulate the thoughts of the mind in the same way, that none of them may be depraved and distorted, so as to give the mind a contrary bent. Having forbidden us to turn and incline our mind to wrath, hatred, adultery, theft, and falsehood, he now forbids us to give our thoughts the same direction.

<sup>1</sup> See *supra*, chap. ii., end of sec. 24, and Book III. chap. iii. sec. 11, 12, 13; and Book IV. chap. xv. sec. 11, 12.

50. Nor is such rectitude demanded without reason. For who can deny the propriety of occupying all the powers of the mind with charity? If it ceases to have charity for its aim, who can question that it is diseased? How comes it that so many desires of a nature hurtful to your brother enter your mind, but just because, disregarding him, you think only of yourself? Were your mind wholly imbued with charity, no portion of it would remain for the entrance of such thoughts. In so far, therefore, as the mind is devoid of charity, it must be under the influence of concupiscence. Some one will object that those fancies which casually rise up in the mind, and forthwith vanish away, cannot properly be condemned as concupiscences, which have their seat in the heart. I answer, That the question here relates to a description of fancies which, while they present themselves to our thoughts, at the same time impress and stimulate the mind with cupidity, since the mind never thinks of making some choice, but the heart is excited and tends towards it. God therefore commands a strong and ardent affection, an affection not to be impeded by any portion, however minute, of concupiscence. He requires a mind so admirably arranged as not to be prompted in the slightest degree contrary to the law of love. Lest you should imagine that this view is not supported by any grave authority, I may mention that it was first suggested to me by Augustine.<sup>1</sup> But although it was the intention of God to prohibit every kind of perverse desire, he, by way of example, sets before us those objects which are generally regarded as most attractive: thus leaving no room for cupidity of any kind, by the interdiction of those things in which it especially delights and loves to revel.

Such, then, is the Second Table of the Law, in which we are sufficiently instructed in the duties which we owe to man for the sake of God, on a consideration of whose nature the whole system of love is founded. It were vain, therefore, to inculcate the various duties taught in this table,

<sup>1</sup> See August. Ep. 200, ad Asellicum, et Quæstio, Lib. lxxxiii., sub fin. Quæst. 66; but especially Conscio. 8, in Ps. cxviii. The subject is also touched on in Ps. cxliii. and De Temp. Sermon. 45, and Retract. Lib. i. cap. 5, and De Continentia, cap. 8.



without placing your instructions on the fear and reverence to God as their proper foundation. I need not tell the considerate reader, that those who make two precepts out of the prohibition of covetousness, perversely split one thing into two. There is nothing in the repetition of the words, "Thou shalt not covet." The "house" being first put down, its different parts are afterwards enumerated, beginning with the "wife;" and hence it is clear, that the whole ought to be read consecutively, as is properly done by the Jews. The sum of the whole commandment, therefore, is, that whatever each individual possesses remain entire and secure, not only from injury, or the wish to injure, but also from the slightest feeling of covetousness which can spring up in the mind.

51. It will not now be difficult to ascertain the general end contemplated by the whole Law, viz., the fulfilment of righteousness, that man may form his life on the model of the divine purity. For therein God has so delineated his own character, that any one exhibiting in action what is commanded, would in some measure exhibit a living image of God. Wherefore Moses, when he wished to fix a summary of the whole in the memory of the Israelites, thus addressed them, "And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, to keep the commandments of the Lord and his statutes which I command thee this day for thy good?" (Deut. x. 12, 13.) And he ceased not to reiterate the same thing, whenever he had occasion to mention the end of the Law. To this the doctrine of the Law pays so much regard, that it connects man, by holiness of life, with his God; and, as Moses elsewhere expresses it, (Deut. vi. 5; xi. 13,) and makes him cleave to him. Moreover, this holiness of life is comprehended under the two heads above mentioned. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength, and thy neighbour as thyself." First, our mind must be completely filled with love to God, and then this love must forthwith flow out toward our neighbour. This the Apostle shows when he says, "The end of the com-

mandment is charity out of a pure heart, and a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned," (1 Tim. i. 5.) You see that conscience and faith unfeigned are placed at the head, in other words, true piety; and that from this charity is derived. It is a mistake then to suppose, that merely the rudiments and first principles of righteousness are delivered in the Law, to form, as it were, a kind of introduction to good works, and not to guide to the perfect performance of them. For complete perfection, nothing more can be required than is expressed in these passages of Moses and Paul. How far, pray, would he wish to go, who is not satisfied with the instruction which directs man to the fear of God, to spiritual worship, practical obedience; in fine, purity of conscience, faith unfeigned, and charity? This confirms that interpretation of the Law which searches out, and finds in its precepts, all the duties of piety and charity. Those who merely search for dry and meagre elements, as if it taught the will of God only by halves, by no means understand its end, the Apostle being witness.

52. As, in giving a summary of the Law, Christ and the Apostles sometimes omit the First Table, very many fall into the mistake of supposing that their words apply to both tables. In Matthew, Christ calls "judgment, mercy, and faith," the "weightier matters of the Law." I think it clear, that by *faith* is here meant veracity towards men. But in order to extend the words to the whole Law, some take it for piety towards God. This is surely to no purpose. For Christ is speaking of those works by which a man ought to approve himself as just. If we attend to this, we will cease to wonder why, elsewhere, when asked by the young man, "What good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?" he simply answers, that he must keep the commandments, "Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," (Matth. xix. 16, 18.) For the obedience of the First Table consisted almost entirely either in the internal affection of the heart, or in ceremonies. The affection of the heart was not visible, and hypocrites were diligent in the ob-

servance of ceremonies ; but the works of charity were of such a nature as to be a solid attestation of righteousness. The same thing occurs so frequently in the Prophets, that it must be familiar to every one who has any tolerable acquaintance with them.<sup>1</sup> For, almost on every occasion, when they exhort men to repentance, omitting the First Table, they insist on faith, judgment, mercy, and equity. Nor do they, in this way, omit the fear of God. They only require a serious proof of it from its signs. It is well known, indeed, that when they treat of the Law, they generally insist on the Second Table, because therein the cultivation of righteousness and integrity is best manifested. There is no occasion to quote passages. Every one can easily for himself perceive the truth of my observation.

53. Is it then true, you will ask, that it is a more complete summary of righteousness to live innocently with men, than piously towards God? By no means ; but because no man, as a matter of course, observes charity in all respects, unless he seriously fear God, such observance is a proof of piety also. To this we may add, that the Lord, well knowing that none of our good deeds can reach him, (as the Psalmist declares, Psalm xvi. 2,) does not demand from us duties towards himself, but exercises us in good works towards our neighbour. Hence the Apostle, not without cause, makes the whole perfection of the saints to consist in charity, (Eph. iii. 19 ; Col. iii. 14.) And in another passage, he not improperly calls it the “fulfilling of the law,” adding, that “he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law,” (Rom. xiii. 8.) And again, “All the law is fulfilled in this : Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself,” (Gal. v. 14.) For this is the very thing which Christ himself teaches when he says, “All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them : for this is the law and the prophets,” (Matth. vii. 12.) It is certain that, in the law and the prophets, faith, and whatever pertains to the due worship of God, holds the first place, and that to this charity is made subordinate ; but our Lord means, that in the Law the observance

<sup>1</sup> Is. i. 17 ; lviii. 6 ; Jer. vii. 5, 6 ; Ezek. xviii. 7, 8 ; Hosea vi. 6 ; Zech. vii. 9, 10.



of justice and equity towards men is prescribed as the means which we are to employ in testifying a pious fear of God, if we truly possess it.

54. Let us therefore hold, that our life will be framed in best accordance with the will of God, and the requirements of his Law, when it is, in every respect, most advantageous to our brethren. But in the whole Law, there is not one syllable which lays down a rule as to what man is to do or avoid for the advantage of his own carnal nature. And, indeed, since men are naturally prone to excessive self-love, which they always retain, how great soever their departure from the truth may be, there was no need of a law to inflame a love already existing in excess. Hence it is perfectly plain,<sup>1</sup> that the observance of the Commandments consists not in the love of ourselves, but in the love of God and our neighbour; and that he leads the best and holiest life who as little as may be studies and lives for himself; and that none lives worse and more unrighteously than he who studies and lives only for himself, and seeks and thinks only of his own. Nay, the better to express how strongly we should be inclined to love our neighbour, the Lord has made self-love as it were the standard, there being no feeling in our nature of greater strength and vehemence. The force of the expression ought to be carefully weighed. For he does not (as some sophists have stupidly dreamed) assign the first place to self-love, and the second to charity. He rather transfers to others the love which we naturally feel for ourselves. Hence the Apostle declares, that charity "seeketh not her own," (1 Cor. xiii. 5.) Nor is the argument worth a straw, That the thing regulated must always be inferior to the rule. The Lord did not make self-love the rule, as if love towards others was subordinate to it; but whereas, through natural pravity, the feeling of love usually rests on ourselves, he shows that it ought to diffuse itself in another direction—that we should be prepared to do good to our neighbour with no less alacrity, ardour, and solicitude, than to ourselves.

55. Our Saviour having shown, in the parable of the Sama-

<sup>1</sup> See Book III. chap. vii. sec. 4. Also August. de Doctrina Christiana, Lib. i. chap. 23, et seqq.

ritan, (Luke x. 36,) that the term *neighbour* comprehends the most remote stranger, there is no reason for limiting the precept of love to our own connections. I deny not that the closer the relation the more frequent our offices of kindness should be. For the condition of humanity requires that there be more duties in common between those who are more nearly connected by the ties of relationship, or friendship, or neighbourhood. And this is done without any offence to God, by whose providence we are in a manner impelled to do it. But I say that the whole human race, without exception, are to be embraced with one feeling of charity: that here there is no distinction of Greek or Barbarian, worthy or unworthy, friend or foe, since all are to be viewed not in themselves, but in God. If we turn aside from this view, there is no wonder that we entangle ourselves in error. Wherefore, if we would hold the true course in love, our first step must be to turn our eyes not to man, the sight of whom might oftener produce hatred than love, but to God, who requires that the love which we bear to him be diffused among all mankind, so that our fundamental principle must ever be, Let a man be what he may, he is still to be loved, because God is loved.

56. Wherefore, nothing could be more pestilential than the ignorance or wickedness of the Schoolmen in converting the precepts respecting revenge and the love of enemies (precepts which had formerly been delivered to all the Jews, and were then delivered universally to all Christians) into counsels which it was free to obey or disobey, confining the necessary observance of them to the monks, who were made more righteous than ordinary Christians, by the simple circumstance of voluntarily binding themselves to obey counsels. The reason they assign for not receiving them as laws is, that they seem too heavy and burdensome, especially to Christians, who are under the law of grace. Have they, indeed, the hardihood to remodel the eternal law of God concerning the love of our neighbour? Is there a page of the Law in which any such distinction exists; or rather, do we not meet in every page with commands which, in the strictest terms, require us to love our enemies? What is

meant by commanding us to feed our enemy if he is hungry, to bring back his ox or his ass if we meet it going astray, or help it up if we see it lying under its burden? (Prov. xxv. 21; Exod. xxiii. 4.) Shall we show kindness to cattle for man's sake, and have no feeling of good will to himself? What? Is not the word of the Lord eternally true: "Vengeance is mine, I will repay?" (Deut. xxxii. 35.) This is elsewhere more explicitly stated: "Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people," (Lev. xix. 18.) Let them either erase these passages from the Law, or let them acknowledge the Lord as a Law-giver, not falsely feign him to be merely a counsellor.

57. And what, pray, is meant by the following passage, which they have dared to insult with this absurd gloss? "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven," (Matth. v. 44, 45.) Who does not here concur in the reasoning of Chrysostom, (*Lib. de Compunctione Cordis, et ad Rom. vii.*), that the nature of the motive makes it plain that these are not exhortations, but precepts? For what is left to us if we are excluded from the number of the children of God? According to the Schoolmen, monks alone will be the children of our Father in heaven—monks alone will dare to invoke God as their Father. And in the meantime, how will it fare with the Church? By the same rule, she will be confined to heathens and publicans. For our Saviour says, "If ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?" It will truly be well with us if we are left only the name of Christians, while we are deprived of the inheritance of the kingdom of heaven! Nor is the argument of Augustine less forcible: "When the Lord forbids adultery, he forbids it in regard to the wife of a foe not less than the wife of a friend; when he forbids theft, he does not allow stealing of any description, whether from a friend or an enemy," (*August. Lib. de Doctr. Christ.*) Now, these two commandments, "Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not commit adultery," Paul brings under the rule of



love; nay, he says that they are briefly comprehended in this saying, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," (Rom. xiii. 9.) Therefore, Paul must either be a false interpreter of the Law, or we must necessarily conclude, that under this precept we are bound to love our enemies just as our friends. Those, then, show themselves to be in truth the children of Satan who thus licentiously shake off a yoke common to the children of God. It may be doubted whether, in promulgating this dogma, they have displayed greater stupidity or impudence. There is no ancient writer who does not hold it as certain that these are pure precepts. It was not even doubted in the age of Gregory, as is plain from his decided assertion; for he holds it to be incontrovertible that they are precepts. And how stupidly they argue! The burden, say they, were too difficult for Christians to bear! As if any thing could be imagined more difficult than to love the Lord with all the heart, and soul, and strength. Compared with this Law, there is none which may not seem easy, whether it be to love our enemy, or to banish every feeling of revenge from our minds. To our weakness, indeed, every thing, even to the minutest tittle of the Law, is arduous and difficult. In the Lord we have strength. It is his to give what he orders, and to order what he wills. That Christians are under the law of grace, means not that they are to wander unrestrained without law, but that they are engrafted into Christ, by whose grace they are freed from the curse of the Law, and by whose Spirit they have the Law written in their hearts. This grace Paul has termed, but not in the proper sense of the term, a law, alluding to the Law of God, with which he was contrasting it. The Schoolmen, laying hold of the term *Law*, make it the ground-work of their vain speculations.<sup>1</sup>

58. The same must be said of their application of the term, venial sin, both to the hidden impiety which violates the First Table, and the direct transgression of the last

<sup>1</sup> The French is, "Ces folastres sans propos prennent un grand mystère en ce mot de Loy;" these foolish fellows absurdly find a great mystery in this term Law.

commandment of the Second Table.<sup>1</sup> They define venial sin to be, desire unaccompanied with deliberate assent, and not remaining long in the heart. But I maintain that it cannot even enter the heart unless through a want of those things which are required in the Law. We are forbidden to have strange gods. When the mind, under the influence of distrust, looks elsewhere, or is seized with some sudden desire to transfer its blessedness to some other quarter, whence are these movements, however evanescent, but just because there is some empty corner in the soul to receive such temptations? And, not to lengthen out the discussion, there is a precept to love God with the whole heart, and mind, and soul; and, therefore, if all the powers of the soul are not directed to the love of God, there is a departure from the obedience of the Law; because those internal enemies which rise up against the dominion of God, and countermand his edicts, prove that his throne is not well established in our consciences. It has been shown that the last commandment goes to this extent. Has some undue longing sprung up in our mind? Then we are chargeable with covetousness, and stand convicted as transgressors of the Law. For the Law forbids us not only to meditate and plan our neighbour's loss, but to be stimulated and inflamed with covetousness. But every transgression of the Law lays us under the curse, and therefore even the slightest desires cannot be exempted from the fatal sentence. "In weighing our sins," says Augustine, "let us not use a deceitful balance, weighing at our own discretion what we will, and how we will, calling this heavy and that light: but let us use the divine balance of the Holy Scriptures, as taken from the treasury of the Lord, and by it weigh every offence, nay, not weigh, but rather recognise what has been already weighed by the Lord," (August. De Bapt. cont. Donatist. Lib. ii. chap. 6.) And what saith the Scripture? Certainly when Paul says, that "the wages of sin is death," (Rom. vi. 23,) he shows that he knew nothing of this vile distinction.

<sup>1</sup> See Book III. chap. iv. sec. 28, where it is also shown, that this is not the dogma of the Stoics—that all sins are equal.

As we are but too prone to hypocrisy, there was very little occasion for this sop to soothe our torpid consciences.

59. I wish they would consider what our Saviour meant when he said, "Whosoever shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven," (Matth. v. 19.) Are they not of this number when they presume to extenuate the transgression of the Law, as if it were unworthy of death? The proper course had been to consider not simply what is commanded, but who it is that commands, because every least transgression of his Law derogates from his authority. Do they count it a small matter to insult the majesty of God in any one respect? Again, since God has explained his will in the Law, every thing contrary to the Law is displeasing to him. Will they feign that the wrath of God is so disarmed that the punishment of death will not forthwith follow upon it? He has declared plainly, (if they could be induced to listen to his voice, instead of darkening his clear truth by their insipid subtleties,) "The soul that sinneth it shall die," (Ezek. xviii. 20.) Again, in the passage lately quoted, "The wages of sin is death." What these men acknowledge to be sin, because they are unable to deny it, they contend is not mortal. Having already indulged this madness too long, let them learn to repent; or, if they persist in their infatuation, taking no further notice of them, let the children of God remember that all sin is mortal, because it is rebellion against the will of God, and necessarily provokes his anger; and because it is a violation of the Law, against every violation of which, without exception, the judgment of God has been pronounced. The faults of the saints are indeed venial, not, however, in their own nature, but because, through the mercy of God, they obtain pardon.



## CHAPTER IX.

CHRIST, THOUGH KNOWN TO THE JEWS UNDER THE LAW,  
YET ONLY MANIFESTED UNDER THE GOSPEL.

There are three principal heads in this chapter. I. Preparatory to a consideration of the knowledge of Christ, and the benefits procured by him; the 1st and 2d sections are occupied with the dispensation of this knowledge, which, after the manifestation of Christ in the flesh, was more clearly revealed than under the Law. II. A refutation of the profane dream of Servetus, that the promises are entirely abrogated, sec. 3. Likewise, a refutation of those who do not properly compare the Law with the Gospel, sec. 4. III. A necessary and brief exposition of the ministry of John Baptist, which occupies an intermediate place between the Law and the Gospel.

*Sections.*

1. The holy fathers under the Law saw the day of Christ, though obscurely. He is more fully revealed to us under the Gospel. A reason for this, confirmed by the testimony of Christ and his Apostles.
2. The term Gospel, used in its most extensive sense, comprehends the attestations of mercy which God gave to the fathers. Properly, however, it means the promulgation of grace exhibited in the God-man Jesus Christ.
3. The notion of Servetus, that the promises are entirely abolished, refuted. Why we must still trust to the promises of God. Another reason. Solution of a difficulty.
4. Refutation of those who do not properly compare the Law and the Gospel. Answer to certain questions here occurring. The Law and the Gospel briefly compared.
5. Third part of the chapter. Of the ministry of John the Baptist.

1. SINCE God was pleased (and not in vain) to testify in ancient times, by means of expiations and sacrifices, that he was a Father, and to set apart for himself a chosen people, he was doubtless known even then in the same character in which he is now fully revealed to us. Accordingly, Malachi,

having enjoined the Jews to attend to the Law of Moses, (because after his death there was to be an interruption of the prophetic office,) immediately after declares that the Sun of righteousness should arise, (Mal. iv. 2;) thus intimating, that though the Law had the effect of keeping the pious in expectation of the coming Messiah, there was ground to hope for much greater light on his advent. For this reason, Peter, speaking of the ancient prophets, says, "Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us, they did minister the things which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you, with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven," (1 Pet. i. 12.) Not that the prophetic doctrine was useless to the ancient people, or unavailing to the prophets themselves, but that they did not obtain possession of the treasure which God has transmitted to us by their hands. The grace of which they testified is now set familiarly before our eyes. They had only a slight foretaste; to us is given a fuller fruition. Our Saviour, accordingly, while he declares that Moses testified of him, extols the superior measure of grace bestowed upon us, (John v. 46.) Addressing his disciples, he says, "Blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them, and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them," (Matth. xiii. 16; Luke x. 23.) It is no small commendation of the gospel revelation, that God has preferred us to holy men of old, so much distinguished for piety. There is nothing in this view inconsistent with another passage, in which our Saviour says, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it and was glad," (John viii. 56.) For though the event being remote, his view of it was obscure, he had full assurance that it would one day be accomplished; and hence the joy which the holy patriarch experienced even to his death. Nor does John Baptist, when he says, "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him," (John i. 18,) exclude the pious who had previously died from a participation in

the knowledge and light which are manifested in the person of Christ ; but comparing their condition with ours, he intimates that the mysteries which they only beheld dimly under shadows are made clear to us ; as is well explained by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, in these words, “ God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son,” (Heb. i. 1, 2.) Hence, although this only begotten Son, who is now to us the brightness of his Father’s glory and the express image of his person, was formerly made known to the Jews, as we have elsewhere shown from Paul, that he was the Deliverer under the old dispensation ; it is nevertheless true, as Paul himself elsewhere declares, that “ God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ,” (2 Cor. iv. 6 ;) because, when he appeared in this his image, he in a manner made himself visible, his previous appearance having been shadowy and obscure. More shameful and more detestable, therefore, is the ingratitude of those who walk blindfold in this meridian light. Accordingly, Paul says that “ the god of this world hath blinded their minds, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine unto them,” (2 Cor. iv. 4.)

2. By the Gospel, I understand the clear manifestation of the mystery of Christ. I confess, indeed, that inasmuch as the term Gospel is applied by Paul to the doctrine of faith, (2 Tim. iv. 10,) it includes all the promises by which God reconciles men to himself, and which occur throughout the Law. For Paul there opposes faith to those terrors which vex and torment the conscience when salvation is sought by means of works. Hence it follows, that *Gospel*, taken in a large sense, comprehends the evidences of mercy and paternal favour which God bestowed on the Patriarchs. Still, by way of excellence, it is applied to the promulgation of the grace manifested in Christ. This is not only founded on general use, but has the sanction of our Saviour and his Apostles. Hence it is described as one of his peculiar characteristics, that he preached the Gospel of the kingdom,



(Matth. iv. 23; ix. 35; Mark i. 14.) Mark, in his preface to the Gospel, calls it "*The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.*" There is no use of collecting passages to prove what is already perfectly known. Christ at his advent "brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel," (2 Tim. i. 10.) Paul does not mean by these words that the Fathers were plunged in the darkness of death before the Son of God became incarnate; but he claims for the Gospel the honourable distinction of being a new and extraordinary kind of embassy, by which God fulfilled what he had promised, these promises being realized in the person of the Son. For though believers have at all times experienced the truth of Paul's declaration, that "all the promises of God in him are yea and amen," inasmuch as these promises were sealed upon their hearts; yet because he hath in his flesh completed all the parts of our salvation, this vivid manifestation of realities was justly entitled to this new and special distinction. Accordingly, Christ says, "Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man." For though he seems to allude to the ladder which the Patriarch Jacob saw in vision, he commends the excellence of his advent in this, that it opened the gate of heaven, and gave us familiar access to it.

3. Here we must guard against the diabolical imagination of Servetus, who, from a wish, or at least the pretence of a wish, to extol the greatness of Christ, abolishes the promises entirely, as if they had come to an end at the same time with the Law. He pretends, that by the faith of the Gospel all the promises have been fulfilled; as if there was no distinction between us and Christ. I lately observed that Christ had not left any part of our salvation incomplete; but from this it is erroneously inferred, that we are now put in possession of all the blessings purchased by him; thereby implying, that Paul was incorrect in saying, "We are saved by hope," (Rom. iii. 24.) I admit, indeed, that by believing in Christ we pass from death unto life; but we must at the same time remember the words of John, that though we know we are "the sons of God," "it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall

appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is," (1 John iii. 2.) Therefore, although Christ offers us in the Gospel a present fulness of spiritual blessings, fruition remains in the keeping of hope,<sup>1</sup> until we are divested of corruptible flesh, and transformed into the glory of him who has gone before us. Meanwhile, in leaning on the promises, we obey the command of the Holy Spirit, whose authority ought to have weight enough with us to silence all the barkings of that impure dog. We have it on the testimony of Paul, that "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come," (1 Tim. iv. 8;) for which reason, he glories in being "an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus," (2 Tim. i. 1.) And he elsewhere reminds us, that we have the same promises which were given to the saints in ancient time, (2 Cor. vii. 1.) In fine, he makes the sum of our felicity consist in being sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise. Indeed, we have no enjoyment of Christ, unless by embracing him as clothed with his own promises. Hence it is, that he indeed dwells in our hearts, and yet we are as pilgrims in regard to him, because "we walk by faith, not by sight," (2 Cor. v. 6, 7.) There is no inconsistency in the two things, viz., that in Christ we possess every thing pertaining to the perfection of the heavenly life, and yet that faith is only a vision "of things not seen," (Heb. xi. 1.) Only there is this difference to be observed in the nature or quality of the promises, that the Gospel points with the finger to what the Law shadowed under types.

4. Hence, also, we see the error of those who, in comparing the Law with the Gospel, represent it merely as a comparison between the merit of works, and the gratuitous imputation of righteousness. The contrast thus made is by no means to be rejected, because, by the term Law, Paul frequently understands that rule of holy living in which God exacts what is his due, giving no hope of life unless we obey in every respect; and, on the other hand, denouncing a curse for the slightest failure. This Paul does when showing that we are

<sup>1</sup> "Sub custodia spei."—French, "sous la garde, et comme sous le cachet d'espoir;" under the guard, and, as it were, under the seal or hope.

freely accepted of God, and accounted righteous by being pardoned, because that obedience of the Law to which the reward is promised is nowhere to be found. Hence he appropriately represents the righteousness of the Law and the Gospel as opposed to each other. But the Gospel has not succeeded the whole Law in such a sense as to introduce a different method of salvation. It rather confirms the Law, and proves that every thing which it promised is fulfilled. What was shadow, it has made substance. When Christ says that the Law and the Prophets were until John, he does not consign the fathers to the curse, which, as the slaves of the Law, they could not escape. He intimates that they were only imbued with the rudiments, and remained far beneath the height of the Gospel doctrine. Accordingly Paul, after calling the Gospel "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth," shortly after adds, that it was "witnessed by the Law and the Prophets," (Rom. i. 16; iii. 21.) And in the end of the same Epistle, though he describes "the preaching of Jesus Christ" as "the revelation of the mystery which was kept secret since the world began," he modifies the expression by adding, that it is "now made manifest" "by the scriptures of the prophets," (Rom. xvi. 25, 26.) Hence we infer, that when the whole Law is spoken of, the Gospel differs from it only in respect of clearness of manifestation. Still, on account of the inestimable riches of grace set before us in Christ, there is good reason for saying, that by his advent the kingdom of heaven was erected on the earth, (Matth. xii. 28.)

5. John stands between the Law and the Gospel, holding an intermediate office allied to both. For though he gave a summary of the Gospel when he pronounced Christ to be "the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world," yet, inasmuch as he did not unfold the incomparable power and glory which shone forth in his resurrection, Christ says that he was not equal to the Apostles. For this is the meaning of the words: "Among them that are born of woman, there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding, he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he," (Matth. xi. 11.) He is not there com-



mending the persons of men, but after preferring John to all the Prophets, he gives the first place to the preaching of the Gospel, which is elsewhere designated by the kingdom of heaven. When John himself, in answer to the Jews, says that he is only "a voice," (John i. 23,) as if he were inferior to the Prophets, it is not in pretended humility, but he means to teach that the proper embassy was not entrusted to him, that he only performed the office of a messenger, as had been foretold by Malachi, "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord," (Mal. iv. 5.) And, indeed, during the whole course of his ministry, he did nothing more than prepare disciples for Christ. He even proves from Isaiah that this was the office to which he was divinely appointed. In this sense, he is said by Christ to have been "a burning and a shining light," (John v. 35,) because full day had not yet appeared. And yet this does not prevent us from classing him among the preachers of the Gospel, since he used the same baptism which was afterwards committed to the Apostles. Still, however, he only began that which had freer course under the Apostles, after Christ was taken up into the heavenly glory.

*reprint*

## CHAPTER X.

### THE RESEMBLANCE BETWEEN THE OLD TESTAMENT AND THE NEW.<sup>1</sup>

This chapter consists of four parts. I. The sum, utility, and necessity of this discussion, sec. 1. II. A proof that, generally speaking, the old and new dispensations are in reality one, although differently administered. Three points in which the two dispensations entirely agree, sec. 2-4. III. The Old Testament, as well as the New, had regard to the hope of immortality and a future life, whence two other resemblances or points of agreement follow, viz., that both were established by the free mercy of God, and confirmed by the intercession of Christ. This proved by many arguments, passages of Scripture, and examples, sec. 5-23. IV. Conclusion of the whole chapter, where, for fuller confirmation, certain passages of Scripture are produced. Refutation of the cavils of the Sadducees and other Jews.

#### *Sections.*

1. Introduction, showing the necessity of proving the similarity of both dispensations in opposition to Servetus and the Anabaptists.
2. This similarity in general. Both covenants truly one, though differently administered. Three things in which they entirely agree.
3. First general similarity, or agreement, viz., that the Old Testament, equally with the New, extended its promises beyond the present life, and held out a sure hope of immortality. Reason for this resemblance. Objection answered.
4. The other two points of resemblance, viz., that both covenants were established in the mercy of God, and confirmed by the mediation of Christ.
5. The first of these points of resemblance being the foundation of the other two, a lengthened proof is given of it. The first argument taken from a passage, in which Paul, showing that the sacraments of both dispensations had the same meaning, proves that the condition of the ancient church was similar to ours.
6. An objection from John vi. 49, viz., that the Israelites ate manna in the wilderness, and are dead, whereas Christians eat the flesh of

<sup>1</sup> As to the agreement of both dispensations, see August. Lib. de Moribus Eccles. Lat., especially cap. xxviii.

Christ, and die not. Answer reconciling this passage of the Evangelist with that of the Apostle.

7. Another proof from the Law and the Prophets, viz., the power of the divine word in quickening souls before Christ was manifested. Hence the believing Jews were raised to the hope of eternal life.
8. Third proof from the form of the covenant, which shows that it was in reality one both before and after the manifestation of Christ in the flesh.
9. Confirmation of the former proof from the clear terms in which the form is expressed. Another confirmation derived from the former and from the nature of God.
10. Fourth proof from examples. Adam, Abel, and Noah, when tried with various temptations, neglecting the present, aspired with living faith and invincible hope to a better life. They, therefore, had the same aim as believers under the Gospel.
11. Continuation of the fourth proof from the example of Abraham, whose call and whole course of life shows that he ardently aspired to eternal felicity. Objection disposed of.
12. Continuation of the fourth proof from the examples of Isaac and Jacob.
13. Conclusion of the fourth proof. Adam, Abel, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and others under the Law, looked for the fulfilment of the divine promises not on the earth, but in heaven. Hence they termed this life an earthly pilgrimage, and desired to be buried in the land of Canaan, which was a figure of eternal happiness.
14. A fifth proof from Jacob's earnestness to obtain the birth-right. This shows a prevailing desire of future life. This perceived in some degree by Balaam.
15. A sixth proof from David, who expects such great things from the Lord, and yet declares the present life to be mere vanity.
16. A seventh proof also from David. His descriptions of the happiness of believers could only be realised in a future state.
17. An eighth proof from the common feeling and confession of all the pious who sought by faith and hope to obtain in heaven what they did not see in the present shadowy life.
18. A continuation and confirmation of the former proof from the exultation of the righteous, even amid the destruction of the world.
19. A ninth proof from Job, who spoke most distinctly of this hope. Two objections disposed of.
20. A tenth proof from the later Prophets, who taught that the happiness of the righteous was placed beyond the limits of the present life.
21. This clearly established by Ezekiel's vision of the dry bones, and a passage in Isaiah.
22. Last proof from certain passages in the Prophets, which clearly



show the future immortality of the righteous in the kingdom of heaven.

23. Conclusion of the whole discussion concerning the similarity of both dispensations. For fuller confirmation, four passages of Scripture produced. Refutation of the error of the Sadducees and other Jews, who denied eternal salvation and the sure hope of the Church.

1. FROM what has been said above, it must now be clear, that all whom, from the beginning of the world, God adopted as his peculiar people, were taken into covenant with him on the same conditions, and under the same bond of doctrine, as ourselves; but as it is of no small importance to establish this point, I will here add it by way of appendix, and show, since the Fathers were partakers with us in the same inheritance, and hoped for a common salvation through the grace of the same Mediator, how far their condition in this respect was different from our own. For although the passages which we have collected from the Law and the Prophets for the purpose of proof, make it plain that there never was any other rule of piety and religion among the people of God; yet as many things are written on the subject of the difference between the Old and New Testaments in a manner which may perplex ordinary readers, it will be proper here to devote a special place to the better and more exact discussion of this subject. This discussion, which would have been most useful at any rate, has been rendered necessary by that monstrous miscreant Servetus, and some madmen of the sect of the Anabaptists, who think of the people of Israel just as they would do of some herd of swine, absurdly imagining that the Lord gorged them with temporal blessings here, and gave them no hope of a blessed immortality.<sup>1</sup> Let us guard pious minds against this pestilential error, while we at the same time remove all the difficulties which are wont to start up when mention is made

<sup>1</sup> The French is, "Veu qu'ils pensent que notre Seigneur l'ait voulu seulement engraisser en terre comme en une auge, sans esperance aucune de l'immortalité celeste;"—seeing they think that our Lord only wished to fatten them on the earth as in a sty, without any hope of heavenly immortality.

of the difference between the Old and the New Testaments. By the way also, let us consider what resemblance and what difference there is between the covenant which the Lord made with the Israelites before the advent of Christ, and that which he has made with us now that Christ is manifested.

2. It is possible, indeed, to explain both in one word. The covenant made with all the fathers is so far from differing from ours in reality and substance, that it is altogether one and the same: still the administration differs. But because this brief summary is insufficient to give any one a full understanding of the subject, our explanation to be useful must extend to greater length. It were superfluous, however, in showing the similarity, or rather identity, of the two dispensations, again to treat of the particulars which have already been discussed, as it were unseasonable to introduce those which are still to be considered elsewhere. What we propose to insist upon here may be reduced to three heads:—*First*, That temporal opulence and felicity was not the goal to which the Jews were invited to aspire, but that they were admitted to the hope of immortality, and that assurance of this adoption was given by immediate communications, by the Law and by the Prophets. *Secondly*, That the covenant by which they were reconciled to the Lord was founded on no merits of their own, but solely on the mercy of God, who called them; and, *thirdly*, That they both had and knew Christ the Mediator, by whom they were united to God, and made capable of receiving his promises. The second of these, as it is not yet perhaps sufficiently understood, will be fully considered in its own place, (Book III. chap. xv.–xviii.) For we will prove by many clear passages in the Prophets, that all which the Lord has ever given or promised to his people is of mere goodness and indulgence. The third also has, in various places, been not obscurely demonstrated. Even the first has not been left unnoticed.

3. As the first is most pertinent to the present subject, and is most controverted, we shall enter more fully into the consideration of it, taking care, at the same time, where any

of the others requires explanation, to supply it by the way, or afterwards add it in its proper place. The Apostle, indeed, removes all doubt when he says that the Gospel which God gave concerning his Son, Jesus Christ, "he had promised aforetime by his prophets in the holy Scriptures," (Rom. i. 2.) And again, that "the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets," (Rom. iii. 21.) For the Gospel does not confine the hearts of men to the enjoyment of the present life, but raises them to the hope of immortality; does not fix them down to earthly delights, but announcing that there is a treasure laid up in heaven, carries the heart thither also. For in another place he thus explains, "After that ye believed [the Gospel,] ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance unto the redemption of the purchased possession," (Eph. i. 13, 14.) Again, "Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all the saints, for the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the Gospel," (Col. i. 4.) Again, "Whereunto he called you by our Gospel to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ," (2 Thess. ii. 14.) Whence also it is called the word of salvation and the power of God, with salvation to every one that believes, and the kingdom of heaven.<sup>1</sup> But if the doctrine of the Gospel is spiritual, and gives access to the possession of incorruptible life, let us not suppose that those to whom it was promised and declared altogether neglected the care of the soul, and lived stupidly like cattle in the enjoyment of bodily pleasures. Let no one here quibble and say, that the promises concerning the Gospel, which are contained in the Law and the Prophets, were designed for a new people.<sup>2</sup> For Paul, shortly after making that statement concerning the Gospel promised in the Law, adds, that "whatsoever things the law saith, it saith to those who are under the law." I admit, indeed, he is there

<sup>1</sup> Acts xiii. 26; Rom. i. 16; 1 Cor. i. 18; Matth. iii. 2, 4, 17, &c., especially xiii.

<sup>2</sup> "Novo populo." French, "au peuple du Nouveau Testament;"—the people of the New Dispensation.



treating of a different subject, but when he said that every thing contained in the Law was directed to the Jews, he was not so oblivious as not to remember what he had said a few verses before of the Gospel promised in the Law. Most clearly, therefore, does the Apostle demonstrate that the Old Testament had special reference to the future life, when he says that the promises of the Gospel were comprehended under it.

4. In the same way we infer that the Old Testament was both established by the free mercy of God and confirmed by the intercession of Christ. For the preaching of the Gospel declares nothing more than that sinners, without any merit of their own, are justified by the paternal indulgence of God. It is wholly summed up in Christ. Who, then, will presume to represent the Jews as destitute of Christ, when we know that they were parties to the Gospel covenant, which has its only foundation in Christ? Who will presume to make them aliens to the benefit of gratuitous salvation, when we know that they were instructed in the doctrine of justification by faith? And not to dwell on a point which is clear, we have the remarkable saying of our Lord, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it and was glad," (John viii. 56.) What Christ here declares of Abraham, an apostle shows to be applicable to all believers, when he says that Jesus Christ is the "same yesterday, to-day, and for ever," (Heb. xiii. 8.) For he is not there speaking merely of the eternal divinity of Christ, but of his power, of which believers had always full proof. Hence both the blessed Virgin<sup>1</sup> and Zachariah, in their hymns, say that the salvation revealed in Christ was a fulfilment of the mercy promised "to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever," (Luke i. 55, 72.) If, by manifesting Christ, the Lord fulfilled his ancient oath, it cannot be denied that the subject of that oath<sup>2</sup> must ever have been Christ and eternal life.

5. Nay, the Apostle makes the Israelites our equals, not only in the grace of the covenant, but also in the signification of the

<sup>1</sup> "Beata Virgo." French, "la Vierge Marie;"—the Virgin Mary.

<sup>2</sup> "Ejus finis." French, "la fin du Vieil Testament;"—the end of the Old Testament.

Sacraments. For employing the example of those punishments, which the Scripture states to have been of old inflicted on the Jews, in order to deter the Corinthians from falling into similar wickedness, he begins with premising that they have no ground to claim for themselves any privilege which can exempt them from the divine vengeance which overtook the Jews, since the Lord not only visited them with the same mercies, but also distinguished his grace among them by the same symbols: as if he had said, If you think you are out of danger, because the Baptism which you received, and the Supper of which you daily partake, have excellent promises, and if, in the meantime, despising the goodness of God, you indulge in licentiousness, know that the Jews, on whom the Lord inflicted his severest judgments, possessed similar symbols. They were baptized in passing through the sea, and in the cloud which protected them from the burning heat of the sun. It is said, that this passage was a carnal baptism, corresponding in some degree to our spiritual baptism. But if so, there would be a want of conclusiveness in the argument of the Apostle, whose object is to prevent Christians from imagining that they excelled the Jews in the matter of baptism. Besides, the cavil cannot apply to what immediately follows, viz., that they did “all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ,” (1 Cor. x. 3, 4.)

6. To take off the force of this passage of Paul, an objection is founded on the words of our Saviour, “Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead.” “If any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever,” (John vi. 49, 51.) There is no difficulty in reconciling the two passages. The Lord, as he was addressing hearers who only desired to be filled with earthly food, while they cared not for the true food of the soul, in some degree adapts his speech to their capacity, and, in particular, to meet their carnal view, draws a comparison between manna and his own body. They called upon him to prove his authority by performing some miracle, such as Moses performed in the wilderness when he obtained manna from heaven. In this manna they saw nothing but a

relief of the bodily hunger from which the people were then suffering; they did not penetrate to the sublimer mystery to which Paul refers. Christ, therefore, to demonstrate that the blessing which they ought to expect from him was more excellent than the lauded one which Moses had bestowed upon their fathers, draws this comparison: If, in your opinion, it was a great and memorable miracle when the Lord, by Moses, supplied his people with heavenly food that they might be supported for a season, and not perish in the wilderness from famine; from this infer how much more excellent is the food which bestows immortality. We see why our Lord omitted to mention what was of principal virtue in the manna, and mentioned only its meanest use. Since the Jews had, as it were by way of upbraiding, cast up Moses to him as one who had relieved the necessity of the people by means of manna, he answers, that he was the minister of a much larger grace, one compared with which the bodily nourishment of the people, on which they set so high a value, ought to be held worthless. Paul, again, knowing that the Lord, when he rained manna from heaven, had not merely supplied their bodies with food, but had also dispensed it as containing a spiritual mystery to typify the spiritual quickening which is obtained in Christ, does not overlook that quality which was most deserving of consideration. Wherefore it is surely and clearly proved, that the same promises of celestial and eternal life, which the Lord now gives to us, were not only communicated to the Jews, but also sealed by truly spiritual sacraments. This subject is copiously discussed by Augustine in his work against Faustus the Manichee.

7. But if my readers would rather have passages quoted from the Law and the Prophets, from which they may see, as we have already done from Christ and the Apostles, that the spiritual covenant was common also to the Fathers, I will yield to the wish, and the more willingly, because opponents will thus be more surely convinced, that henceforth there will be no room for evasion. And I will begin with a proof which, though I know it will seem futile and almost ridiculous to supercilious Anabaptists, will have very great



weight with the docile and sober-minded. I take it for granted that the word of God has such an inherent efficacy, that it quickens the souls of all whom he is pleased to favour with the communication of it. Peter's statement has ever been true, that it is an incorruptible seed, "which liveth and abideth for ever," (1 Peter i. 23,) as he infers from the words of Isaiah, (Is. xl. 6.) Now when God, in ancient times, bound the Jews to him by this sacred bond, there cannot be a doubt that he separated them unto the hope of eternal life. When I say that they embraced the word which brought them nearer to God, I refer not to that general method of communication which is diffused through heaven and earth, and all the creatures of the world, and which, though it quickens all things, each according to its nature, rescues none from the bondage of corruption. I refer to that special mode of communication by which the minds of the pious are both enlightened in the knowledge of God, and, in a manner, linked to him. Adam, Abel, Noah, Abraham, and the other patriarchs, having been united to God by this illumination of the word, I say there cannot be the least doubt that entrance was given them into the immortal kingdom of God. They had that solid participation in God which cannot exist without the blessing of everlasting life.

8. If the point still seems somewhat involved, let us pass to the form of the covenant, which will not only satisfy calm thinkers, but sufficiently establish the ignorance of gain-sayers. The covenant which God always made with his servants was this, "I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people," (Lev. xxvi. 12.) These words, even as the prophets are wont to expound them, comprehend life and salvation, and the whole sum of blessedness. For David repeatedly declares, and with good reason, "Happy is that people whose God is the Lord." "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance," (Psalm cxliv. 15; xxxiii. 12;) and this not merely in respect of earthly happiness, but because he rescues from death, constantly preserves, and, with eternal mercy, visits those whom he has adopted for his people. As is said in other prophets, "Art not thou

from everlasting, O Lord my God, mine Holy One? we shall not die." "The Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king; he will save us." "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord?" (Hab. i. 12; Isaiah xxxiii. 22; Deut. xxxiii. 29.) But not to labour superfluously, the prophets are constantly reminding us that no good thing, and, consequently, no assurance of salvation, is wanting, provided the Lord is our God. And justly. For if his face, the moment it hath shone upon us, is a perfect pledge of salvation, how can he manifest himself to any one as his God, without opening to him the treasures of salvation? The terms on which God makes himself ours is to dwell in the midst of us, as he declared by Moses, (Lev. xxvi. 11.) But such presence cannot be enjoyed without life being, at the same time, possessed along with it. And though nothing more had been expressed, they had a sufficiently clear promise of spiritual life in these words, "I am your God," (Exod. vi. 7.) For he declared that he would be a God not to their bodies only, but specially to their souls. Souls, however, if not united to God by righteousness, remain estranged from him in death. On the other hand, that union, wherever it exists, will bring perpetual salvation with it.

9. To this we may add, that he not only declared he was, but also promised that he would be, their God. By this their hope was extended beyond present good, and stretched forward into eternity. Moreover, that this observance of the future had the effect, appears from the many passages in which the faithful console themselves not only in their present evils, but also for the future, by calling to mind that God was never to desert them. Moreover, in regard to the second part of the promise, viz., the blessing of God, its extending beyond the limits of the present life was still more clearly confirmed by the words, I will be the God of your seed after you, (Gen. xvii. 7.) If he was to manifest his favour to the dead by doing good to their posterity, much less would he deny his favour to themselves. God is not like men, who transfer their love to the children of their friends, because the opportunity of bestowing kind offices as they wished

upon themselves is interrupted by death. But God, whose kindness is not impeded by death, does not deprive the dead of the benefit of his mercy, which, on their account, he continues to a thousand generations. God, therefore, was pleased to give a striking proof of the abundance and greatness of his goodness which they were to enjoy after death, when he described it as overflowing to all their posterity, (Exod. xx. 6.) The truth of this promise was sealed, and in a manner completed, when, long after the death of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, he called himself their God, (Exod. xx. 6.) And why? Was not the name absurd if they had perished? It would have been just the same as if he had said, I am the God of men who exist not. Accordingly, the Evangelists relate that, by this very argument, our Saviour refuted the Sadducees, (Matth. xxii. 23; Luke xx. 32,) who were, therefore, unable to deny that the resurrection of the dead was attested by Moses, inasmuch as he had taught them that all the saints are in his hand, (Deut. xxxiii. 3.) Whence it is easy to infer that death is not the extinction of those who are taken under the tutelage, guardianship, and protection of him who is the disposer of life and death.

10. Let us now see (and on this the controversy principally turns) whether or not believers themselves were so instructed by the Lord, as to feel that they had elsewhere a better life, and to aspire to it while disregarding the present. First, the mode of life which heaven had imposed upon them made it a constant exercise, by which they were reminded, that if in this world only they had hope, they were of all men the most miserable. Adam, most unhappy even in the mere remembrance of his lost felicity, with difficulty supplies his wants by anxious labours; and that the divine curse might not be restricted to bodily labour, his only remaining solace becomes a source of the deepest grief. Of two sons, the one is torn from him by the parricidal hand of his brother; while the other, who survives, causes detestation and horror by his very look. Abel, cruelly murdered in the very flower of his days, is an example of the calamity which had come upon man. While the whole world are securely living in luxury, Noah, with much fatigue, spends a great part of



his life in building an ark. He escapes death, but by greater troubles than a hundred deaths could have given. Besides his ten months' residence in the ark, as in a kind of sepulchre, nothing could have been more unpleasant than to have remained so long pent up among the filth of beasts. After escaping these difficulties he falls into a new cause of sorrow. He sees himself mocked by his own son, and is forced, with his own mouth, to curse one whom, by the great kindness of God, he had received safe from the deluge.

11. Abraham alone ought to be to us equal to tens of thousands if we consider his faith, which is set before us as the best model of believing, to whose race also we must be held to belong in order that we may be the children of God.<sup>1</sup> What could be more absurd than that Abraham should be the father of all the faithful, and not even occupy the meanest corner among them? He cannot be denied a place in the list; nay, he cannot be denied one of the most honourable places in it, without the destruction of the whole Church. Now, as regards his experience in life, the moment he is called by the command of God, he is torn away from friends, parents, and country, objects in which the chief happiness of life is deemed to consist, as if it had been the fixed purpose of the Lord to deprive him of all the sources of enjoyment. No sooner does he enter the land in which he was ordered to dwell, than he is driven from it by famine. In the country to which he retires to obtain relief, he is obliged, for his personal safety, to expose his wife to prostitution. This must have been more bitter than many deaths. After returning to the land of his habitation, he is again expelled by famine. What is the happiness of inhabiting a land where you must so often suffer from hunger, nay, perish from famine, unless you flee from it? Then, again, with Abimelech, he is reduced to the same necessity of saving his head by the loss of his wife, (Gen. xii. 12.) While he wanders up and down uncertain for many years, he is compelled, by the constant quarrelling of servants, to part with his nephew, who was to him as a son. This departure must

<sup>1</sup> Calv. in Genes. cap. xii. 11—15.

doubtless have cost him a pang something like the cutting off of a limb. Shortly after, he learns that his nephew is carried off captive by the enemy. Wherever he goes, he meets with savage-hearted neighbours, who will not even allow him to drink of the wells which he has dug with great labour. For he would not have purchased the use from the king of Gerar if he had not been previously prohibited. After he had reached the verge of life, he sees himself childless, (the bitterest and most unpleasant feeling to old age,) until, beyond expectation, Ishmael is born; and yet he pays dearly for his birth in the reproaches of Sarah, as if he was the cause of domestic disturbance by encouraging the contumacy of a female slave. At length Isaac is born, but in return, the first-born Ishmael is displaced, and almost hostilely driven forth and abandoned. Isaac remains alone, and the good man, now worn out with age, has his heart upon him, when shortly after he is ordered to offer him up in sacrifice. What can the human mind conceive more dreadful than for the father to be the murderer of his son? Had he been carried off by disease, who would not have thought the old man much to be pitied in having a son given to him in mockery, and in having his grief for being childless doubled to him? Had he been slain by some stranger, this would, indeed, have been much worse than natural death. But all these calamities are little compared with the murder of him by his father's hand. Thus, in fine, during the whole course of his life, he was harassed and tossed in such a way, that any one desirous to give a picture of a calamitous life could not find one more appropriate. Let it not be said that he was not so very distressed, because he at length escaped from all these tempests. He is not said to lead a happy life who, after infinite difficulties during a long period, at last laboriously works out his escape, but he who calmly enjoys present blessings without any alloy of suffering.

12. Isaac is less afflicted, but he enjoys very few of the sweets of life. He also meets with those vexations which do not permit a man to be happy on the earth. Famine drives him from the land of Canaan; his wife is torn from

his bosom ; his neighbours are ever and anon annoying and vexing him in all kinds of ways, so that he is even obliged to fight for water. At home, he suffers great annoyance from his daughters-in-law ; he is stung by the dissension of his sons, and has no other cure for this great evil than to send the son whom he had blessed into exile, (Gen. xxvi. xxvii.) Jacob, again, is nothing but a striking example of the greatest wretchedness. His boyhood is passed most uncomfortably at home amidst the threats and alarms of his elder brother, and to these he is at length forced to give way, (Gen. xxvii. xxviii.) A fugitive from his parents and his native soil, in addition to the hardships of exile, the treatment he receives from his uncle Laban is in no respect milder and more humane, (Gen. xxix.) As if it had been little to spend seven years of hard and rigorous servitude, he is cheated in the matter of a wife. For the sake of another wife, he must undergo a new servitude, during which, as he himself complains, the heat of the sun scorches him by day, while in frost and cold he spends the sleepless night, (Gen. xxxi. 40, 41.) For twenty years he spends this bitter life, and daily suffers new injuries from his father-in-law. Nor is he quiet at home, which he sees disturbed and almost broken up by the hatreds, quarrels, and jealousies of his wives. When he is ordered to return to his native land, he is obliged to take his departure in a manner resembling an ignominious flight. Even then he is unable to escape the injustice of his father-in-law, but in the midst of his journey is assailed by him with contumely and reproach, (Gen. xxxi. 20.<sup>1</sup>) By and bye a much greater difficulty befalls him, (Gen. xxxii. xxxiii.) For as he approaches his brother, he has as many forms of death in prospect as a cruel foe could

<sup>1</sup> The French is, " Et encore ne peut il pas ainsi eviter l'iniquité de son beau père, qu'il ne soit de lui persecuté, et atteint au milieu du chemin ; et pourceque Dieu ne permettoit point qu'il lui advint pis, il est vexé de beaucoup d'opprobres et contumelies, par celui du quel il avoit bonne matiere de se plaindre."—Even thus he cannot escape the injustice of his father-in-law, but is persecuted by him, and attacked in the midst of his journey ; and because God did not allow worse to happen, he is assailed with much contumely and reproach by one of whom he had good cause to complain.



invent. Hence, while waiting for his arrival, he is distracted and excruciated by direful terrors; and when he comes into his sight, he falls at his feet like one half dead, until he perceives him to be more placable than he had ventured to hope. Moreover, when he first enters the land, he is bereaved of Rachel his only beloved wife. Afterwards he hears that the son whom she had borne him, and whom he loved more than all his other children, is devoured by a wild beast, (Gen. xxxvii. 33.) How deep the sorrow caused by his death he himself evinces, when, after long tears, he obstinately refuses to be comforted, declaring that he will go down to the grave to his son mourning. In the meantime, what vexation, anxiety, and grief, must he have received from the carrying off and dishonour of his daughter, and the cruel revenge of his sons, which not only brought him into bad odour with all the inhabitants of the country, but exposed him to the greatest danger of extermination? (Gen. xxxiv.) Then follows the horrid wickedness of Reuben his first-born, wickedness than which none could be committed more grievous, (Gen. xxxvi. 22.) The dishonour of a wife being one of the greatest of calamities, what must be said when the atrocity is perpetrated by a son? Some time after, the family is again polluted with incest, (Gen. xxxviii. 18.) All these disgraces might have crushed a mind otherwise the most firm and unbroken by misfortune. Towards the end of his life, when he seeks relief for himself and his family from famine, he is struck by the announcement of a new misfortune, that one of his sons is detained in prison, and that to recover him he must entrust to others his dearly beloved Benjamin, (Gen. xlii. xliii.) Who can think that in such a series of misfortunes, one moment was given him in which he could breathe secure? Accordingly, his own best witness, he declares to Pharaoh, "Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been," (Gen. xlvii. 9.) In declaring that he had spent his life in constant wretchedness, he denies that he had experienced the prosperity which had been promised him by the Lord. Jacob, therefore, either formed a malignant and ungrateful estimate of the Lord's favour, or he truly declared that he

had lived miserable on the earth. If so, it follows that his hope could not have been fixed on earthly objects.

13. If these holy Patriarchs expected a happy life from the hand of God, (and it is indubitable that they did,) they viewed and contemplated a different happiness from that of a terrestrial life. This is admirably shown by an Apostle, "By faith he [Abraham] sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city," (Heb. xi. 9, 10, 13-16.) They had been duller than blocks in so pertinaciously pursuing promises, no hope of which appeared upon the earth, if they had not expected their completion elsewhere. The thing which the Apostle specially urges, and not without reason, is, that they called this world a pilgrimage, as Moses also relates, (Gen. xlvii. 9.) If they were pilgrims and strangers in the land of Canaan, where is the promise of the Lord which appointed them heirs of it? It is clear, therefore, that the promise of possession which they had received looked farther. Hence, they did not acquire a footbreadth in the land of Canaan, except for sepulture; thus testifying that they hoped not to receive the benefit of the promise till after death. And this is the reason why Jacob set so much value on being buried there, that he took Joseph bound by oath to see it done; and why Joseph wished that his bones should some ages later, long after they had mouldered into dust, be carried thither, (Gen. xlvii. 29, 30; i. 25.)

14. In short, it is manifest, that in the whole course of

their lives, they had an eye to future blessedness. Why should Jacob have aspired so earnestly to primogeniture, and intrigued for it at so much risk, if it was to bring him only exile and destitution, and no good at all, unless he looked to some higher blessing? And that this was his feeling, he declared in one of the last sentences he uttered, "I have waited for thy salvation, O God," (Gen. xlix. 18.) What salvation could he have waited for, when he felt himself breathing his last, if he did not see in death the beginning of a new life? And why talk of saints and the children of God, when even one, who otherwise strove to resist the truth, was not devoid of some similar impression? For what did Balaam mean when he said, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his," (Num. xxiii. 10,) unless he felt convinced of what David afterward declares, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints?" (Ps. cxvi. 15; xxxiv. 12.) If death were the goal and ultimate limit, no distinction could be observed between the righteous and the wicked. The true distinction is the different lot which awaits them after death.

15. We have not yet come farther down than the books of Moses, whose only office, according to our opponents, was to induce the people to worship God, by setting before them the fertility of the land, and its general abundance; and yet to every one who does not voluntarily shun the light, there is clear evidence of a spiritual covenant. But if we come down to the Prophets, the kingdom of Christ and eternal life are there exhibited in the fullest splendour. First, David, as earlier in time, in accordance with the order of the Divine procedure, spoke of heavenly mysteries more obscurely than they, and yet with what clearness and certainty does he point to it in all he says. The value he put upon his earthly habitation is attested by these words, "I am a stranger with thee, and a sojourner, as all my fathers were. Verily every man at his best estate is altogether vanity. Surely every man walketh in a vain show. And now, Lord, what wait I for? my hope is in thee," (Ps. xxxix. 12, 5, 6, 7.) He who confesses that there is nothing solid or stable on the earth, and yet firmly retains his hope in God, undoubtedly con-



templates a happiness reserved for him elsewhere. To this contemplation he is wont to invite believers whenever he would have them to be truly comforted. For, in another passage, after speaking of human life as a fleeting and evanescent show, he adds, "The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him," (Ps. ciii. 17.) To this there is a corresponding passage in another psalm, "Of old thou hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure; yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed; but thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end. The children of thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before thee," (Ps. cii. 25-28.) If, notwithstanding of the destruction of the heavens and the earth, the godly cease not to be established before God, it follows, that their salvation is connected with his eternity. But this hope could have no existence, if it did not lean upon the promise as expounded by Isaiah, "The heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner; but my salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished," (Isa. li. 6.) Perpetuity is here attributed to righteousness and salvation, not as they reside in God, but as they are experienced by men.

16. Nor can those things which are everywhere said as to the prosperous success of believers be understood in any other sense than as referring to the manifestation of celestial glory. Of this nature are the following passages: "He preserveth the souls of his saints; he delivereth them out of the hand of the wicked. Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart." "His righteousness endureth for ever; his horn shall be exalted with honour—the desire of the wicked shall perish." "Surely the righteous shall give thanks unto thy name; the upright shall dwell in thy presence." "The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance." "The Lord redeemeth the soul of his servants."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ps. xcvi. 10, 11; cxii. 9, 10; cxl. 13; cxii. 6; xxxiv. 22.

But the Lord often leaves his servants, not only to be annoyed by the violence of the wicked, but to be lacerated and destroyed; allows the good to languish in obscurity and squalid poverty, while the ungodly shine forth, as it were, among the stars; and even by withdrawing the light of his countenance does not leave them lasting joy. Wherefore, David by no means disguises the fact, that if believers fix their eyes on the present condition of the world, they will be grievously tempted to believe that with God integrity has neither favour nor reward; so much does impiety prosper and flourish, while the godly are oppressed with ignominy, poverty, contempt, and every kind of cross. The Psalmist says, "But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped. For I was envious of the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked." At length, after a statement of the case, he concludes, "When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me: until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end," (Ps. lxxiii. 2, 3, 16, 17.)

17. Therefore, even from this confession of David, let us learn that the holy fathers under the Old Testament were not ignorant that in this world God seldom or never gives his servants the fulfilment of what is promised them, and therefore has directed their minds to his sanctuary, where the blessings not exhibited in the present shadowy life are treasured up for them. This sanctuary was the final judgment of God, which, as they could not at all discern it by the eye, they were contented to apprehend by faith. Inspired with this confidence, they doubted not that whatever might happen in the world, a time would at length arrive when the divine promises would be fulfilled. This is attested by such expressions as these: "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness," (Psalm xvii. 15.) "I am like a green olive tree in the house of God," (Psalm lii. 8.) Again, "The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing," (Psalm xcii. 12-14.) He had exclaimed

a little before, "O Lord, how great are thy works! and thy thoughts are very deep." "When the wicked spring as the grass, and when all the workers of iniquity do flourish: it is that they shall be destroyed for ever." Where was this splendour and beauty of the righteous, unless when the appearance of this world was changed by the manifestation of the heavenly kingdom? Lifting their eyes to the eternal world, they despised the momentary hardships and calamities of the present life, and confidently broke out into these exclamations: "He shall never suffer the righteous to be moved. But thou, O God, shalt bring them down into the pit of destruction: bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days," (Psalm lv. 22, 23.) Where in this world is there a pit of eternal destruction to swallow up the wicked, of whose happiness it is elsewhere said, "They spend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave?" (Job xxi. 13.) Where, on the other hand, is the great stability of the saints, who, as David complains, are not only disturbed, but everywhere utterly bruised and oppressed? It is here. He set before his eyes not merely the unstable vicissitudes of the world, tossed like a troubled sea, but what the Lord is to do when he shall one day sit to fix the eternal constitution of heaven and earth, as he in another place elegantly describes: "They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches; none of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him." "For he seeth that wise men die, likewise the fool and the brutish person perish, and leave their wealth to others. Their inward thought is, that their houses shall continue for ever, and their dwelling-places to all generations; they call their lands after their own names. Nevertheless, man being in honour abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish. This their way is their folly: yet their posterity approve their sayings. Like sheep they are laid in the grave; death shall feed on them; and the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning; and their beauty shall consume in the grave from their dwelling," (Psalm xlix. 6, 7, 10-14.) By this derision of the foolish for resting satisfied with the slippery and fickle pleasures of



the world, he shows that the wise must seek for a very different felicity. But he more clearly unfolds the hidden doctrine of the resurrection when he sets up a kingdom to the righteous after the wicked are cast down and destroyed. For what, pray, are we to understand by the "morning," unless it be the revelation of a new life, commencing when the present comes to an end?

18. Hence the consideration which believers employed as a solace for their sufferings, and a remedy for their patience: "His anger endureth but a moment: in his favour is life," (Psalm xxx. 5.) How did their afflictions, which continued almost throughout the whole course of life, terminate in a moment? Where did they see the long duration of the divine benignity, of which they had only the slightest taste? Had they clung to earth, they could have found nothing of the kind; but looking to heaven, they saw that the period during which the Lord afflicted his saints was but a moment, and that the mercies with which he gathers them are everlasting: on the other hand, they foresaw that for the wicked, who only dreamed of happiness for a day, there was reserved an eternal and never-ending destruction. Hence those expressions: "The memory of the just is blessed, but the name of the wicked shall rot," (Prov. x. 7.) "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints," (Psalm cxvi. 15.) Again in Samuel: "The Lord will keep the feet of his saints, and the wicked shall be silent in darkness," (1 Sam. ii. 9;) showing they knew well, that however much the righteous might be tossed about, their latter end was life and peace; that how pleasant soever the delights of the wicked, they gradually lead down to the chambers of death. They accordingly designated the death of such persons as the death "of the uncircumcised," that is, persons cut off from the hope of resurrection, (Ezek. xxviii. 10; xxxi. 18.) Hence David could not imagine a greater curse than this: "Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous," (Psalm lxix. 28.)

19. The most remarkable passage of all is that of Job: "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin

worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God : whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another," (Job xix. 25-27.) Those who would make a display of their acuteness, pretend that these words are to be understood not of the last resurrection, but of the day when Job expected that God would deal more gently with him. Granting that this is partly meant, we shall, however, compel them, whether they will or not, to admit that Job never could have attained to such fulness of hope if his thoughts had risen no higher than the earth. It must, therefore, be confessed, that he who saw that the Redeemer would be present with him when lying in the grave, must have raised his eyes to a future immortality. To those who think only of the present life, death is the extremity of despair ; but it could not destroy the hope of Job. "Though he slay me," said he, "yet will I trust in him," (Job xiii. 15.) Let no trifler here burst in with the objection that these are the sayings of a few, and do not by any means prove that there was such a doctrine among the Jews. To this my instant answer is, that these few did not in such passages give utterance to some hidden wisdom, to which only distinguished individuals were admitted privately and apart from others, but that having been appointed by the Holy Spirit to be the teachers of the people, they openly promulgated the mysteries of God, which all in common behoved to learn as the principles of public religion. When, therefore, we hear that those passages in which the Holy Spirit spoke so distinctly and clearly of the spiritual life were public oracles in the Jewish Church, it were intolerably perverse to confine them entirely to a carnal covenant relating merely to the earth and earthly riches.

20. When we descend to the later prophets, we have it in our power to expatiate freely as in our own field. If, when David, Job, and Samuel, were in question, the victory was not difficult, much easier is it here ; for the method and economy which God observed in administering the covenant of his mercy was, that the nearer the period of its full exhibition approached, the greater the additions which were daily made to the light of revelation. Accordingly, at the

beginning, when the first promise of salvation was given to Adam, (Gen. iii. 15,) only a few slender sparks beamed forth: additions being afterwards made, a greater degree of light began to be displayed, and continued gradually to increase and shine with greater brightness, until at length all the clouds being dispersed, Christ the Sun of righteousness arose, and with full refulgence illumined all the earth, (Mal. iv.) In appealing to the Prophets, therefore, we can have no fear of any deficiency of proof; but as I see an immense mass of materials, which would occupy us much longer than compatible with the nature of our present work, (the subject, indeed, would require a large volume,) and as I trust, that by what has already been said, I have paved the way, so that every reader of the very least discernment may proceed without stumbling, I will avoid a prolixity, for which at present there is little necessity; only reminding my readers to facilitate the entrance by means of the key which was formerly put into their hands, (*supra*, Chap. IV. sec. 3, 4;) namely, that whenever the Prophets make mention of the happiness of believers, (a happiness of which scarcely any vestiges are discernible in the present life,) they must have recourse to this distinction: that the better to commend the Divine goodness to the people, they used temporal blessings as a kind of lineaments to shadow it forth, and yet gave such a portrait as might lift their minds above the earth, the elements of this world, and all that will perish, and compel them to think of the blessedness of a future and spiritual life.

21. One example will suffice. When the Israelites were carried away to Babylon, their dispersion seemed to be the next thing to death, and they could scarcely be dissuaded from thinking that Ezekiel's prophecy of their restoration (Ezek. xxxvii. 4) was a mere fable, because it seemed to them the same thing as if he had prophesied that putrid carcases would be raised to life. The Lord, in order to show that, even in that case, there was nothing to prevent him from making room for his kindness, set before the prophet in vision a field covered with dry bones, to which, by the mere power of his word, he in one moment restored life and strength. The vision served, indeed, to correct the unbelief of the Jews



at the time, but it also reminded them how much farther the power of the Lord extended than to the bringing back of the people, since by a single nod it could so easily give life to dry scattered bones. Wherefore, the passage may be fitly compared with one in Isaiah, "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead. Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. For, behold, the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain," (Isa. xxvi. 19-21.)

22. It were absurd, however, to interpret all the passages on a similar principle; for there are several which point without any veil to the future immortality which awaits believers in the kingdom of heaven. Some of them we have already quoted, and there are many others, but especially the following two. The one is in Isaiah, "As the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord. And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcases of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh," (Isa. lxvi. 22-24.) The other passage is in Daniel. "At that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as there never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt," (Dan. xii. 1, 2.)

23. In proving the two remaining points, viz., that the Patriarchs had Christ as the pledge of their covenant, and

placed all their hope of blessing in him, as they are clearer, and not so much controverted, I will be less particular. Let us then lay it down confidently as a truth which no engines of the devil can destroy—that the Old Testament or covenant which the Lord made with the people of Israel was not confined to earthly objects, but contained a promise of spiritual and eternal life, the expectation of which behoved to be impressed on the minds of all who truly consented to the covenant. Let us put far from us the senseless and pernicious notion, that the Lord proposed nothing to the Jews, or that they sought nothing but full supplies of food, carnal delights, abundance of wealth, external influence, a numerous offspring, and all those things which our animal nature deems valuable. For, even now, the only kingdom of heaven which our Lord Jesus Christ promises to his followers, is one in which they may sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, (Matth. viii. 11;) and Peter declared of the Jews of his day, that they were heirs of gospel grace because they were the sons of the prophets, and comprehended in the covenant which the Lord of old made with his people, (Acts iii. 25.) And that this might not be attested by words merely, our Lord also approved it by act, (Matth. xxvii. 52.) At the moment when he rose again, he deigned to make many of the saints partakers of his resurrection, and allowed them to be seen in the city; thus giving a sure earnest, that every thing which he did and suffered in the purchase of eternal salvation belonged to believers under the Old Testament, just as much as to us. Indeed, as Peter testifies, they were endued with the same spirit of faith by which we are regenerated to life, (Acts xv. 8.) When we hear that that spirit, which is, as it were, a kind of spark of immortality in us, (whence it is called the “earnest” of our inheritance, Eph. i. 14,) dwelt in like manner in them, how can we presume to deny them the inheritance? Hence, it is the more wonderful how the Sadducees of old fell into such a degree of sottishness as to deny both the resurrection and the substantive existence<sup>1</sup> of spirits, both of which were

<sup>1</sup> “*Animarum substantiam.*” French, “*immortalité des ames* ;”—immortality of souls.

attested to them by so many striking passages of Scripture. Nor would the stupidity of the whole nation in the present day, in expecting an earthly reign of the Messiah, be less wonderful, had not the Scriptures foretold this long before as the punishment which they were to suffer for rejecting the Gospel, God, by a just judgment, blinding minds which voluntarily invite darkness, by rejecting the offered light of heaven. They read, and are constantly turning over the pages of Moses, but a veil prevents them from seeing the light which beams forth in his countenance, (2 Cor. iii. 14;) and thus to them he will remain covered and veiled until they are converted to Christ, between whom and Moses they now study, as much as in them lies, to maintain a separation.



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## CHAPTER XI.

### THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE TWO TESTAMENTS.

This chapter consists principally of three parts. I. Five points of difference between the Old and the New Testament, sec. 1-11. II. The last of these points being, that the Old Testament belonged to the Jews only, whereas the New Testament belongs to all; the calling of the Gentiles is shortly considered, sec. 12. III. A reply to two objections usually taken to what is here taught concerning the difference between the Old and the New Testaments, sec. 13, 14.

#### *Sections.*

1. Five points of difference between the Old and the New Testaments. These belong to the mode of administration rather than the substance. First difference. In the Old Testament the heavenly inheritance is exhibited under temporal blessings; in the New, aids of this description are not employed.
2. Proof of this first difference from the simile of an heir in pupillarity, as in Gal. iv. 1.
3. This the reason why the Patriarchs, under the Law, set a higher value on this life and the blessings of it, and dreaded the punishments, these being even more striking. Why severe and sudden punishments existed under the Law.
4. A second difference. The Old Testament typified Christ under ceremonies. The New exhibits the immediate truth and the whole body. The scope of the Epistle to the Hebrews in explaining this difference. Definition of the Old Testament.
5. Hence the Law our Schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ.
6. Notwithstanding, among those under the Law, some of the strongest examples of faith are exhibited, their equals being scarcely to be found in the Christian Church. The ordinary method of the divine dispensation to be here attended to. These excellent individuals placed under the Law, and aided by ceremonies, that they might behold and hail Christ afar off.
7. Third difference. The Old Testament is literal, the New spiritual. This difference considered first generally.
8. Next treated specially, on a careful examination of the Apostle's text. A threefold antithesis. The Old Testament is literal, deadly, temporary. The New is spiritual, quickening, eternal. Difference between the letter and the spirit.

9. Fourth difference. The Old Testament belongs to bondage, the New to liberty. This confirmed by three passages of Scripture. Two objections answered.
10. Distinction between the three last differences and the first. Confirmation of the above from Augustine. Condition of the patriarchs under the Old Testament.
11. Fifth difference. The Old Testament belonged to one people only, the New to all.
12. The second part of the chapter depending on the preceding section. Of the calling of the Gentiles. Why the calling of the Gentiles seemed to the Apostles so strange and new.
13. The last part of the chapter. Two objections considered. 1. God being immutable, cannot consistently disapprove what he once ordered. Answer confirmed by a passage of Scripture.
14. Objections. 2. God could at first have transacted with the Jews as he now does with Christians. Answer, showing the absurdity of this objection. Another answer founded on a just consideration of the divine will and the dispensation of grace.

1. WHAT, then? you will say, Is there no difference between the Old and the New Testaments? What is to become of the many passages of Scripture in which they are contrasted as things differing most widely from each other? I readily admit the differences which are pointed out in Scripture, but still hold that they derogate in no respect from their established unity, as will be seen after we have considered them in their order. These differences (so far as I have been able to observe them and can remember) seem to be chiefly four, or, if you choose to add a fifth, I have no objections. I hold and think I will be able to show, that they all belong to the mode of administration rather than to the substance. In this way, there is nothing in them to prevent the promises of the Old and New Testament from remaining the same, Christ being the foundation of both. The first difference then is, that though, in old time, the Lord was pleased to direct the thoughts of his people, and raise their minds to the heavenly inheritance, yet, that their hope of it might be the better maintained, he held it forth, and, in a manner, gave a foretaste of it under earthly blessings, whereas the gift of future life, now more clearly and lucidly revealed by the Gospel, leads our minds directly to meditate upon it, the inferior mode of exercise formerly employed in regard to the Jews being now laid

aside. Those who attend not to the divine purpose in this respect, suppose that God's ancient people ascended no higher than the blessings which were promised to the body. They hear the land of Canaan so often named as the special, and as it were the only, reward of the Divine Law to its worshippers; they hear that the severest punishment which the Lord denounces against the transgressors of the Law is expulsion from the possession of that land and dispersion into other countries; they see that this forms almost the sum of the blessings and curses declared by Moses; and from these things they confidently conclude that the Jews were separated from other nations not on their own account, but for another reason, viz., that the Christian Church might have an emblem in whose outward shape might be seen an evidence of spiritual things. But since the Scripture sometimes demonstrates that the earthly blessings thus bestowed were intended by God himself to guide them to a heavenly hope, it shows great unskilfulness, not to say dulness, not to attend to this mode of dispensation. The ground of controversy is this: our opponents hold that the land of Canaan was considered by the Israelites as supreme and final happiness, and now, since Christ was manifested, typifies to us the heavenly inheritance; whereas we maintain that, in the earthly possession which the Israelites enjoyed, they beheld, as in a mirror, the future inheritance which they believed to be reserved for them in heaven.

2. This will better appear from the similitude which Paul uses in Galatians, (Gal. iv. 1.) He compares the Jewish nation to an heir in pupillarity, who, as yet unfit to govern himself, follows the direction of a tutor or guide to whose charge he has been committed. Though this simile refers especially to ceremonies, there is nothing to prevent us from applying it most appropriately here also. The same inheritance was destined to them as to us, but from nonage they were incapable of entering to it, and managing it. They had the same Church, though it was still in puerility. The Lord, therefore, kept them under this tutelage, giving them spiritual promises, not clear and simple, but typified by earthly objects. Hence, when he chose Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and their



posterity, to the hope of immortality, he promised them the land of Canaan for an inheritance, not that it might be the limit of their hopes, but that the view of it might train and confirm them in the hope of that true inheritance, which, as yet, appeared not. And, to guard against delusion, they received a better promise, which attested that this earth was not the highest measure of the divine kindness. Thus, Abraham is not allowed to keep down his thoughts to the promised land: by a greater promise his views are carried upward to the Lord. He is thus addressed, "Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward," (Gen. xv. 1.) Here we see that the Lord is the final reward promised to Abraham, that he might not seek a fleeting and evanescent reward in the elements of this world, but look to one which was incorruptible. A promise of the land is afterwards added for no other reason than that it might be a symbol of the divine benevolence, and a type of the heavenly inheritance, as the saints declare their understanding to have been. Thus David rises from temporal blessings to the last and highest of all, "My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever." "My heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God," (Ps. lxxiii. 26; lxxxiv. 2.) Again, "The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup: thou maintainest my lot," (Ps. xvi. 5.) Again, "I cried unto thee, O Lord: I said, Thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living," (Ps. cxlii. 5.) Those who can venture to speak thus, assuredly declare that their hope rises beyond the world and worldly blessings. This future blessedness, however, the prophets often describe under a type which the Lord had taught them. In this way are to be understood the many passages in Job (Job xviii. 17) and Isaiah, to the effect, That the righteous shall inherit the earth, that the wicked shall be driven out of it, that Jerusalem will abound in all kinds of riches, and Sion overflow with every species of abundance. In strict propriety, all these things obviously apply not to the land of our pilgrimage, nor to the earthly Jerusalem, but to the true country, the heavenly city of

believers, in which the Lord hath commanded blessing and life for evermore, (Ps. cxxxiii. 3.)

3. Hence the reason why the saints under the Old Testament set a higher value on this mortal life and its blessings than would now be meet. For, though they well knew, that in their race they were not to halt at it as the goal, yet, perceiving that the Lord, in accommodation to their feebleness, had there imprinted the lineaments of his favour, it gave them greater delight than it could have done if considered only in itself. For, as the Lord, in testifying his good will towards believers by means of present blessings, then exhibited spiritual felicity under types and emblems, so, on the other hand, by temporal punishments he gave proofs of his judgment against the reprobate. Hence, by earthly objects, the favour of the Lord was displayed, as well as his punishment inflicted. The unskilful, not considering this analogy and correspondence (if I may so speak) between rewards and punishments, wonder that there is so much variance in God, that those who, in old time, were suddenly visited for their faults with severe and dreadful punishments, he now punishes much more rarely and less severely, as if he had laid aside his former anger; and, for this reason, they can scarcely help imagining, like the Manichees, that the God of the Old Testament was different from that of the New. But we shall easily disencumber ourselves of such doubts if we attend to that mode of divine administration to which I have adverted—that God was pleased to indicate and typify both the gift of future and eternal felicity by terrestrial blessings, as well as the dreadful nature of spiritual death by bodily punishments, at that time when he delivered his covenant to the Israelites as under a kind of veil.

4. Another distinction between the Old and New Testaments is in the types, the former exhibiting only the image of truth, while the reality was absent, the shadow instead of the substance, the latter exhibiting both the full truth and the entire body. Mention is usually made of this, whenever the New Testament is contrasted with the Old,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The French is, “et à icelle se doivent reduire quasi tous les passages, auxquels le vieil Testament est opposé au Nouveau par com-

but it is no where so fully treated as in the Epistle to the Hebrews, (chap. vii.—x.) The Apostle is there arguing against those who thought that the observances of the Mosaic Law could not be abolished without producing the total ruin of religion. In order to refute this error, he adverts to what the Psalmist had foretold concerning the priesthood of Christ, (Ps. cx. 4.) Seeing that an eternal priesthood is assigned to him, it is clear that the priesthood in which there was a daily succession of priests is abolished. And he proves that the institution of this new Priest must prevail, because confirmed by an oath. He afterwards adds, that a change of the priest necessarily led to a change of the covenant. And the necessity of this he confirms by the reason, that the weakness of the law was such, that it could make nothing perfect. He then goes on to show in what this weakness consists, namely, that it had external carnal observances which could not render the worshippers perfect in respect of conscience, because its sacrifices of beasts could neither take away sins nor procure true holiness. He therefore concludes that it was a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, and accordingly had no other office than to be an introduction to the better hope which is exhibited in the Gospel.

Here we may see in what respect the legal is compared with the evangelical covenant, the ministry of Christ with that of Moses. If the comparison referred to the substance of the promises, there would be a great repugnance between the two covenants; but since the nature of the case leads to a different view, we must follow it in order to discover the truth. Let us, therefore, bring forward the covenant which God once ratified as eternal and unending. Its completion, whereby it is fixed and ratified, is Christ. Till such completion takes place, the Lord, by Moses, prescribes ceremonies which are, as it were, formal symbols of confirmation. The point brought under discussion was, Whether or not the ceremonies ordained in the Law behaved

paraison."—And to this ought in a manner to be referred all the passages in which the Old Testament is, by way of comparison, opposed to the New.



to give way to Christ. Although these were merely accidents of the covenant, or at least additions and appendages, and, as they are commonly called, accessories, yet because they were the means of administering it, the name of covenant is applied to them, just as is done in the case of other sacraments.<sup>1</sup> Hence, in general, the Old Testament is the name given to the solemn method of confirming the covenant comprehended under ceremonies and sacrifices. Since there is nothing substantial in it, until we look beyond it, the Apostle contends that it behoved to be annulled and become antiquated, (Heb. vii. 22,) to make room for Christ, the surety and mediator of a better covenant, by whom the eternal sanctification of the elect was once purchased, and the transgressions which remained under the Law wiped away. But if you prefer it, take it thus : the covenant of the Lord was old, because veiled by the shadowy and ineffectual observance of ceremonies ; and it was therefore temporary, being, as it were, in suspense until it received a firm and substantial confirmation. Then only did it become new and eternal when it was consecrated and established in the blood of Christ. Hence the Saviour, in giving the cup to his disciples in the last supper, calls it the cup of the new testament in his blood ; intimating, that the covenant of God was truly realised, made new, and eternal, when it was sealed with his blood.

5. It is now clear in what sense the Apostle said, (Gal. iii. 24 ; iv. 1,) that by the tutelage of the Law the Jews were conducted to Christ, before he was exhibited in the flesh. He confesses that they were sons and heirs of God, though, on account of nonage, they were placed under the guardianship of a tutor. It was fit, the Sun of Righteousness not yet having risen, that there should neither be so much light of revelation nor such clear understanding. The Lord dispensed the light of his word, so that they could behold it at a distance, and obscurely. Accordingly, this slender measure

<sup>1</sup> "Qualiter et aliis Sacramentis dari solet." French, "comme l'Ecriture a coutume d'attribuer aux sacremens le nom des choses qu'ils representent ;"—just as Scripture is wont to give sacraments the names of the things which they represent.

of intelligence is designated by Paul by the term *childhood*, which the Lord was pleased to train by the elements of this world, and external observances, until Christ should appear. Through him the knowledge of believers was to be matured. This distinction was noted by our Saviour himself when he said that the Law and the Prophets were until John, that from that time the gospel of the kingdom was preached, (Matth. xi. 13.) What did the Law and the Prophets deliver to the men of their time? They gave a foretaste of that wisdom which was one day to be clearly manifested, and showed it afar off. But where Christ can be pointed to with the finger, there the kingdom of God is manifested. In him are contained all the treasures of wisdom and understanding, and by these we penetrate almost to the very shrine of heaven.

6. There is nothing contrary to this in the fact, that in the Christian Church scarcely one is to be found who, in excellence of faith, can be compared to Abraham, and that the Prophets were so distinguished by the power of the Spirit, that even in the present day they give light to the whole world. For the question here is, not what grace the Lord conferred upon a few, but what was the ordinary method which he followed in teaching the people, and which even was employed in the case of those very prophets who were endued with special knowledge above others. For their preaching was both obscure as relating to distant objects, and was included in types. Moreover, however wonderful the knowledge displayed in them, as they were under the necessity of submitting to the tutelage common to all the people, they must also be ranked among children. Lastly, none of them ever had such a degree of discernment as not to savour somewhat of the obscurity of the age. Whence the words of our Saviour, "Many kings and prophets have desired to see the things which you see, and have not seen them, and to hear the things which ye hear, and have not heard them. Blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear," (Matth. xiii. 17.) And it was right that the presence of Christ should have this distinguishing feature, that by means of it the revelation of heavenly

mysteries should be made more transparent. To the same effect is the passage which we formerly quoted from the First Epistle of Peter, that to them it was revealed that their labour should be useful not so much to themselves as to our age.

7. I proceed to the third distinction, which is thus expressed by Jeremiah: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand, to bring them out of the land of Egypt; (which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord;) but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them," (Jer. xxxi. 31-34.) From these words, the Apostle took occasion to institute a comparison between the Law and the Gospel, calling the one a doctrine of the letter, the other a doctrine of the spirit; describing the one as formed on tables of stone, the other on tables of the heart; the one the preaching of death, the other of life; the one of condemnation, the other of justification; the one made void, the other permanent, (2 Cor. iii. 5, 6.) The object of the Apostle being to explain the meaning of the Prophet, the words of the one furnish us with the means of ascertaining what was understood by both. And yet there is some difference between them. For the Apostle speaks of the Law more disparagingly than the Prophet. This he does not simply in respect of the Law itself, but because there were some false zealots of the Law who, by a perverse zeal for ceremonies, obscured the clearness of the Gospel, he treats of the nature of the Law with reference to their error and foolish affection. It will, therefore, be proper to attend to this peculiarity in Paul. Both, however, as they are contrasting the Old and New Testa-



ment, consider nothing in the Law but what is peculiar to it. For example, the Law everywhere<sup>1</sup> contains promises of mercy; but as these are adventitious to it, they do not enter into the account of the Law as considered only in its own nature. All which is attributed to it is, that it commands what is right, prohibits crimes, holds forth rewards to the cultivators of righteousness, and threatens transgressors with punishment, while at the same time it neither changes nor amends that depravity of heart which is naturally inherent in all.

8. Let us now explain the Apostle's contrast step by step. The Old Testament is literal, because promulgated without the efficacy of the Spirit: the New spiritual, because the Lord has engraven it on the heart. The second antithesis is a kind of exposition of the first. The Old is deadly, because it can do nothing but involve the whole human race in a curse; the New is the instrument of life, because those who are freed from the curse it restores to favour with God. The former is the ministry of condemnation, because it charges the whole sons of Adam with transgression; the latter the ministry of righteousness, because it unfolds the mercy of God, by which we are justified. The last antithesis must be referred to the Ceremonial Law. Being a shadow of things to come, it behoved in time to perish and vanish away; whereas the Gospel, inasmuch as it exhibits the very body, is firmly established for ever. Jeremiah, indeed, calls the Moral Law also a weak and fragile covenant; but for another reason, namely, because it was immediately broken by the sudden defection of an ungrateful people; but as the blame of such violation is in the people themselves, it is not properly alleged against the covenant. The ceremonies, again, inasmuch as through their very weakness they were dissolved by the advent of Christ, had the cause of weakness from within. Moreover, the difference between the spirit and the letter must not be understood as if the Lord had delivered his Law to the Jews without any good result; *i. e.* as if none had been converted to him. It

<sup>1</sup> "Passim." French, "*ça et là*;"—here and there.

is used comparatively to commend the riches of the grace with which the same Lawgiver, assuming, as it were, a new character, honoured the preaching of the Gospel. When we consider the multitude of those whom, by the preaching of the Gospel, he has regenerated by his Spirit, and gathered out of all nations into the communion of his Church, we may say that those of ancient Israel who, with sincere and heartfelt affection, embraced the covenant of the Lord, were few or none, though the number is great when they are considered in themselves without comparison.

9. Out of the third distinction a fourth arises. In Scripture, the term bondage is applied to the Old Testament, because it begets fear, and the term freedom to the New, because productive of confidence and security. Thus Paul says to the Romans, "Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father," (Rom. viii. 15.) To the same effect is the passage in the Hebrews, "For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more: (for they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart: and so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake :) but ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem," &c. (Heb. xii. 18-22.) What Paul briefly touches on in the passage which we have quoted from the Romans, he explains more fully in the Epistle to the Galatians, where he makes an allegory of the two sons of Abraham in this way: "Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all," (Gal. iv. 25, 26.) As the offspring of Agar was born in slavery, and could never attain to the inheritance, while that of Sara was free and entitled to the inheritance, so by the Law we are subjected

to slavery, and by the Gospel alone regenerated into liberty. The sum of the matter comes to this : The Old Testament filled the conscience with fear and trembling, the New inspires it with gladness. By the former the conscience is held in bondage, by the latter it is manumitted and made free. If it be objected, that the holy fathers among the Israelites, as they were endued with the same spirit of faith, must also have been partakers of the same liberty and joy, we answer, that neither was derived from the Law ; but feeling that by the Law they were oppressed like slaves, and vexed with a disquieted conscience, they fled for refuge to the Gospel ; and, accordingly, the peculiar advantage of the Gospel was, that, contrary to the common rule of the Old Testament, it exempted those who were under it from those evils. Then, again, we deny that they did possess the spirit of liberty and security in such a degree as not to experience some measure of fear and bondage. For however they might enjoy the privilege which they had obtained through the grace of the Gospel, they were under the same bonds and burdens of observances as the rest of their nation. Therefore, seeing they were obliged to the anxious observance of ceremonies, (which were the symbols of a tutelage bordering on slavery, and handwritings by which they acknowledged their guilt, but did not escape from it,) they are justly said to have been, comparatively, under a covenant of fear and bondage, in respect of that common dispensation under which the Jewish people were then placed.

10. The three last contrasts to which we have adverted, (sec. 4, 7, 9,) are between the Law and the Gospel, and hence in these the Law is designated by the name of the Old, and the Gospel by that of the New Testament. The first is of wider extent, (sec. 1,) comprehending under it the promises which were given even before the Law. When Augustine maintained that these were not to be included under the name of the Old Testament, (August. ad Bonifac. Lib. iii. c. 14,) he took a most correct view, and meant nothing different from what we have now taught ; for he had in view those passages of Jeremiah and Paul in which the Old Testament is distinguished from the word of grace and



mercy. In the same passage, Augustine, with great shrewdness, remarks, that from the beginning of the world the sons of promise, the divinely regenerated, who, through faith working by love, obeyed the commandments, belonged to the New Testament ; entertaining the hope not of carnal, earthly, temporal, but spiritual, heavenly, and eternal blessings, believing especially in a Mediator, by whom they doubted not both that the Spirit was administered to them, enabling them to do good, and pardon imparted as often as they sinned. The thing which he thus intended to assert was, that all the saints mentioned in Scripture, from the beginning of the world, as having been specially selected by God, were equally with us partakers of the blessing of eternal salvation. The only difference between our division and that of Augustine is, that ours (in accordance with the words of our Saviour, "All the prophets and the law prophesied until John," Matth. xi. 13) distinguishes between the gospel light and that more obscure dispensation of the word which preceded it, while the other division simply distinguishes between the weakness of the Law and the strength of the Gospel. And here also, with regard to the holy fathers, it is to be observed, that though they lived under the Old Testament, they did not stop there, but always aspired to the New, and so entered into sure fellowship with it. Those who, contented with existing shadows, did not carry their thoughts to Christ, the Apostle charges with blindness and malediction. To say nothing of other matters, what greater blindness can be imagined, than to hope for the expiation of sin from the sacrifice of a beast, or to seek mental purification in external washing with water, or to attempt to appease God with cold ceremonies, as if he were greatly delighted with them ? Such are the absurdities into which those fall who cling to legal observances, without respect to Christ.

11. The fifth distinction which we have to add consists in this, that until the advent of Christ, the Lord set apart one nation, to which he confined the covenant of his grace. Moses says, "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the

children of Israel. For the Lord's portion is his people ; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance," (Deut. xxxii. 8, 9.) In another passage he thus addresses the people : " Behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens is the Lord's thy God, the earth also, with all that therein is. Only the Lord had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and he chose their seed, after them, even you, above all people, as it is this day," (Deut. x. 14, 15.) That people, therefore, as if they had been the only part of mankind belonging to him, he favoured exclusively with the knowledge of his name, depositing his covenant, as it were, in their bosom, manifesting to them the presence of his divinity, and honouring them with all privileges. But to say nothing of other favours, the only one here considered is his binding them to him by the communion of his word, so that he was called and regarded as their God. Meanwhile, other nations, as if they had had no kind of intercourse with him, he allowed to wander in vanity, not even supplying them with the only means of preventing their destruction, viz., the preaching of his word. Israel was thus the Lord's favourite child, the others were aliens. Israel was known and admitted to trust and guardianship, the others left in darkness ; Israel was made holy, the others were profane ; Israel was honoured with the presence of God, the others kept far aloof from him. But on the fulness of the time destined to renew all things, when the Mediator between God and man was manifested, the middle wall of partition, which had long kept the divine mercy within the confines of Israel, was broken down, peace was preached to them who were afar off, as well as to those who were nigh, that being together reconciled to God, they might unite as one people. Wherefore, there is now no respect of Jew or Greek, of circumcision or uncircumcision, but Christ is all and in all. To him the heathen have been given for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession, (Ps. ii. 8,) that he may rule without distinction " from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth," (Ps. lxxii. 8.)

12. The calling of the Gentiles, therefore, is a distinguishing feature illustrative of the superiority of the New

over the Old Testament. This, it is true, had been previously declared by the prophets, in passages both numerous and clear, but still the fulfilment of it was deferred to the reign of the Messiah. Even Christ did not acknowledge it at the very outset of his ministry, but delayed it until having completed the whole work of redemption in all its parts, and finished the period of his humiliation, he received from the Father "a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow," (Philip. ii. 9, 10.) Hence the period being not yet completed, he declared to the woman of Canaan, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel," (Matth. xv. 24.) Nor in his first commission to the Apostles does he permit them to pass the same limits, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel," (Matth. x. 5, 6.) However plainly the thing may have been declared in numerous passages, when it was announced to the Apostles, it seemed to them so new and extraordinary, that they were horrified at it as something monstrous. At length, when they did act upon it, it was timorously, and not without reluctance. Nor is this strange; for it seemed by no means in accordance with reason, that the Lord, who for so many ages had selected Israel from the rest of the nations, should suddenly, as it were, change his purpose, and abandon his choice. Prophecy, indeed, had foretold it, but they could not be so attentive to prophecies, as not to be somewhat startled by the novel spectacle thus presented to their eye. It was not enough that God had in old times given specimens of the future calling of the Gentiles. Those whom he had so called were very few in number, and, moreover, he in a manner adopted them into the family of Abraham, before allowing them to approach his people. But by this public call, the Gentiles were not only made equal to the Jews, but seemed to be substituted into their place, as if the Jews had been dead.<sup>1</sup> We may add, that any strangers whom God had formerly admitted into the body of the Church, had never been put on the same footing with the Jews.

<sup>1</sup> "In demortuorum locum." The French is simply, "en leur lieu;"—into their place.



Wherefore, it is not without cause that Paul describes it as "the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints," (Col. i. 26.)

13. The whole difference between the Old and New Testaments has, I think, been fully and faithfully explained, under these four or five heads, in so far as requisite for ordinary instruction. But since this variety in governing the Church, this diversity in the mode of teaching, this great change in rites and ceremonies, is regarded by some as an absurdity, we must reply to them before passing to other matters. And this can be done briefly, because the objections are not so strong<sup>1</sup> as to require a very careful refutation. It is unreasonable, they say, to suppose that God, who is always consistent with himself, permitted such a change as afterwards to disapprove what he had once ordered and commended. I answer, that God ought not to be deemed mutable, because he adapts different forms to different ages, as he knows to be expedient for each. If the husbandman prescribes one set of duties to his household in winter, and another in summer, we do not therefore charge him with fickleness, or think he deviates from the rules of good husbandry, which depends on the regular course of nature. In like manner, if a father of a family, in educating, governing, and managing his children, pursues one course in boyhood, another in adolescence, and another in manhood, we do not therefore say that he is fickle, or abandons his opinions. Why, then, do we charge God with inconstancy, when he makes fit and congruous arrangements for diversities of times? The latter similitude ought to be completely satisfactory. Paul likens the Jews to children, and Christians to grown men, (Gal. iv. 1.) What irregularity is there in the Divine arrangement, which confined them to the rudiments which were suitable to their age, and trains us by a firmer and more manly discipline? The constancy of God is conspicuous in this, that he delivered the same doctrine to all ages, and persists in requiring that worship of his name which he commanded at the beginning. His changing the external form

<sup>1</sup> "Firmæ." French, "Ne si fortes, ne si urgentes;"—neither so strong, nor so pressing.

and manner does not show that he is liable to change. In so far he has only accommodated himself to the mutable and diversified capacities of man.

14. But it is said, Whence this diversity, save that God chose to make it? Would it not have been as easy for him from the first, as after the advent of Christ, to reveal eternal life in clear terms without any figures, to instruct his people by a few clear sacraments, to bestow his Holy Spirit, and diffuse his grace over the whole globe? This is very much the same as to bring a charge against God, because he created the world at so late a period, when he could have done it at the first, or because he appointed the alternate changes of summer and winter, of day and night. With the feeling common to every pious mind, let us not doubt that every thing which God has done has been done wisely and justly, although we may be ignorant of the cause which required that it should be so done. We should arrogate too much to ourselves were we not to concede to God that he may have reasons for his counsel, which we are unable to discern. It is strange, they say, that he now repudiates and abominates the sacrifices of beasts, and the whole apparatus of that Levitical priesthood in which he formerly delighted. As if those external and transient matters could delight God, or affect him in any way!<sup>1</sup> It has already been observed, that he appointed none of these things on his own account, but instituted them all for the salvation of men. If a physician, adopting the best method, effects a cure upon a youth, and afterwards, when the same individual has grown old, and is again subject to the same disease, employs a different method of cure, can it be said that he repudiates the method which he formerly approved? Nay, continuing to approve of it, he only adapts himself to the different periods of life. In like manner, it was necessary in representing Christ in his absence, and predicting his future advent, to employ a different set of signs from those which are employed, now that his actual manifestation is exhibited. It is true, that since the advent of Christ, the calling of God is more widely addressed to all

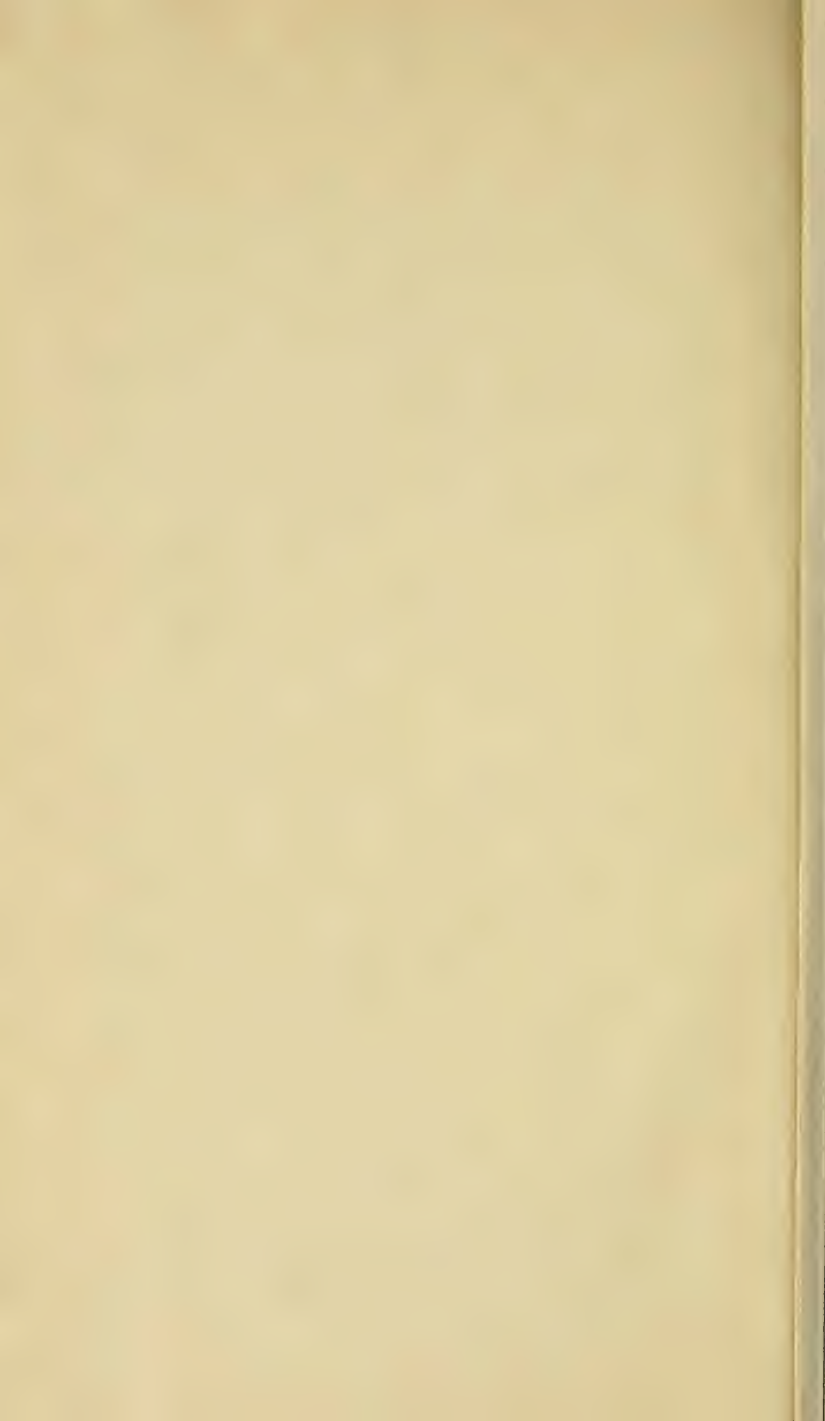
<sup>1</sup> "Aut ullo modo afficiant." French, "ou comme si jamais il s'y fust arrêté;"—or as if he could ever have stopped at them.

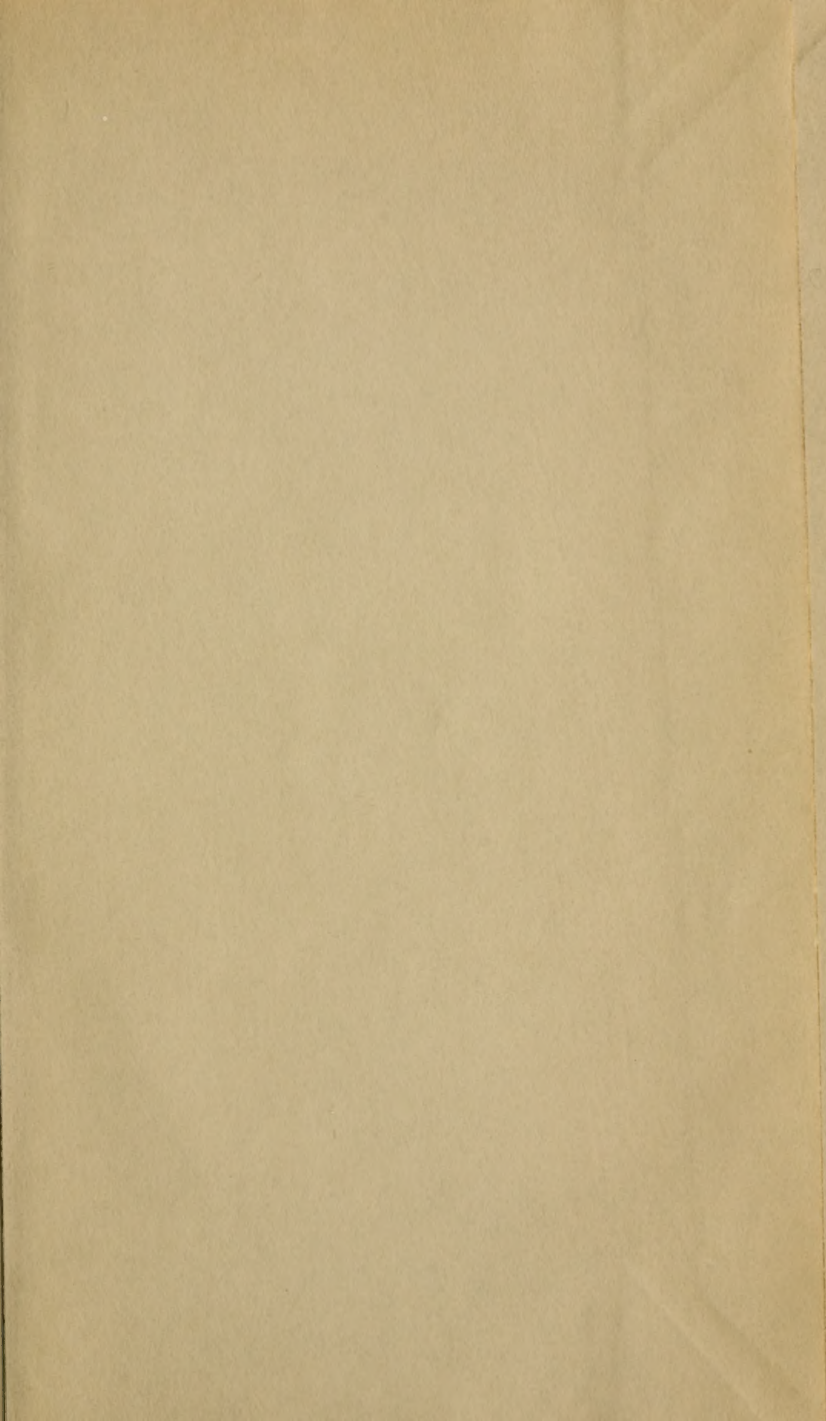
nations, and the graces of the Spirit more liberally bestowed than they had previously been. But who, I ask, can deny the right of God to have the free and uncontrolled disposal of his gifts, to select the nations which he may be pleased to illuminate, the places which he may be pleased to illustrate by the preaching of his word, and the mode and measure of progress and success which he may be pleased to give to his doctrine,—to punish the world for its ingratitude, by withdrawing the knowledge of his name for certain ages, and again, when he so pleases, to restore it in mercy? We see, then, that in the calumnies which the ungodly employ in this matter, to perplex the minds of the simple, there is nothing that ought to throw doubt either on the justice of God or the veracity of Scripture.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.













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